AN OLD FRIEND

WITH

A NEW FACE:

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PARSONS.

VOL. I.

Ah! what avails it that in jocund morn
Life's early roſes bloom'd without a thorn,
That on my youth propitious fortune ſmil'd,
And hope, illuſive, ev'ry hour beguil'd?
Ah! what avails it!----but in me to ſhow
How near are join'd th' extremes of bliſs and woe?

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15 MAR 11

WITH THE

HIGHEST VENERATION,

THE MOST PERFECT RESPECT, AND

THE WARMEST GRATITUDE,

THE FOLLOWING WORK IS INSCRIBED,

TO

The Right Honorable

LADY HOWARD;

BY

HER LADYSHIP'S

MUCH OBLIGED, AND MOST

OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

AN OLD FRIEND

WITH

A NEW FACE.

" Woes cluſter; ſeldom are ſolitary woes."

YOUNG.

" AH!" cried Madame Bruyere, ſtarting from her ſeat, on the entrance of her huſband, " ah! you need not ſpeak, I tranſlate your looks, *all* is loſt, and we are undone!"

" Too truly gueſſed, my dear Louiſa, alas! you and our children have no longer a home, a fortune, relations, or friends: *all is loſt.* Our adverſary has called in ſuch powerful auxiliaries, that oppreſſion lords it over innocence, and falſe claims are permitted to ſuperſede legal rights. The unpardonable crime of my uncle being a proteſtant has ſealed our ruin."

"My children," cried Madame Bruyere, lifting her eyes to heaven, "my poor friendleſs children! what will become of them!" "That Power who knows the ſecrets of our hearts, who for wiſe purpoſes permits the wicked to triumph, and proves virtue in the hard ſchool of adverſity; *that* gracious Power will protect *them*, will inſpire *us* with fortitude to brave the misfortunes that overwhelm us at preſent, and enable us to exert our ſtrength and abilities to counteract the cruel deſigns of our enemies. Yes, we will labour to provide for our children."

"Alas!" anſwered ſhe, "had we been *born* to labour, how eaſy, how delightful the taſk." "The greater the effort, the more laudable the attempt; few things are impoſſible to a willing mind; and to a parent, how will every difficulty ſink before the anxious deſire of preſerving thoſe ſo dear to him from poverty and want!" "You are right," replied ſhe, embracing him, "we may be oppreſſed, we will not be ſubdued.—The wicked do not

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not triumph for ever; our children may one day recover the rights we are ſo unjuſtly deprived of."

Monſieur de Bruyere ſighed, but he would not repreſs this too lively hope; he had ſucceeded much beyond his expectations in leſſening her apprehenſions of evil, and thought he might now communicate the baleful intelligence in its utmoſt extent. "I have the firmeſt reliance on Providence," ſaid he, in an elevated tone, "to ſuffer without ſelf-reproach, diſarms adverſity of its ſharpeſt ſtings; that *inward* ſatisfaction we cannot be deprived of; *that* will ſmooth the rugged paths before us.—My dear Louiſa, we muſt inſtantly leave this houſe, 'tis no longer our's; perſons are already below in poſſeſſion; our clothes and trinkets, after being inſpected, are all that is left to us: thank heaven, we have life and liberty, health and a peaceful conſcience."

"Inſtantly," repeated ſhe, changing countenance, "what, this day?" "This very day; our whole fortune is adjudged

to the Count Themirez, ſentence of baniſhment has paſſed on me, and within four and twenty hours I muſt quit Paris, never to return." "O, gracious heaven!" exclaimed ſhe, "is it poſſible malice and injuſtice can thus overpower the innocent! Baniſhed, deprived of all; could not the cruel diſpoſition of the Count be ſatisfied without ſtigmatizing you with irreparable diſgrace? Baniſhed! O, it is too much, too hard to bear!"

The unfortunate Monſieur Bruyere ſaw the agitations of his beloved wife with unutterable anguiſh; his feelings were of the moſt exquiſite kind; his mental agonies were great, but the innate nobleneſs of his ſoul roſe ſuperior to the malicious perſecutions of his enemies; he diſdained to gratify *them* by a ſingle complaint or remonſtrance: he had bowed to the ſentence, and retired with an air of dignity and compoſure, at once expreſſive of innocence and conſcious rectitude.

But *here* the feelings of the huſband and father were no longer ſupported by

pride

pride or reſentment; he had ſought to acquire that compoſure and reſignation neceſſary to ſoften the tale he knew muſt inflict ſorrow and miſery; and *thought* he could repreſs the emotions that wrung his very ſoul in the ſtruggle.

The diſtreſs of a darling wife, and the ſudden entrance of his two lovely children, with all the gaiety of youthful playfulneſs, in a moment overcame the fortitude he had laboured for; and ſnatching the youngeſt to his arms, he ſunk into a chair, and wept aloud.—The elder, a little boy of eight years old, run to his mother, ſhe ſtooped to receive him, and fell ſenſeleſs on the floor.

Inſtantly alarmed, Monſieur Bruyere flew to aſſiſt his wife, while the cries of his children brought up the ſervants: ſhe was ſoon reſtored.—" Courage, my dear Louiſa," ſaid he, " heaven will protect us, Providence is our guide."

She gave him her hand, " Forgive my weakneſs, I will ſtruggle againſt it—Yet *indeed* 'tis a painful ſtroke to be thus ſud-

denly deprived of *every* bleſſing, and like the firſt pair to be driven from Paradiſe without a home to receive us." "If *they* were condemned to ſuch exquiſite miſery for *one* act of diſobedience, think how often *we* have erred, and how comparatively light are *our* ſufferings! Heaven is ſtill attainable, if we ſubmit with reſignation to its decrees, and reſolve to follow the paths of rectitude."

"I will no longer murmur," returned ſhe, "tell me what *I am to do*, what I *muſt* bear, and you ſhall ſee I will not ſhrink from the performance of my duties." He claſped her in his arms, "I am not diſappointed," ſaid he, "my Louiſa is a heroine." Then turning to the ſervants, who ſtood with mournful looks, expecting the diſmiſſion they dreaded.—"My friends," added he, "I have loſt my cauſe, this houſe, the fortune I poſſeſſed, is no longer mine. I can have no further occaſion for your ſervices; I am a baniſhed man; happily I have wherewith to pay your demands, though I cannot recompence your fidelity."

A uni-

A univerſal groan, a general guſh of tears precluded words. He was greatly agitated, and beſought them to retire; they obeyed in reſpectful ſilence, all but one, who had been his particular attendant for many years, and in his family from a boy; he lingered the laſt, then throwing himſelf at the feet of his maſter, "Forgive me, Sir, I dare not, cannot leave you; deprive me not of the only pleaſure in life, that of following the broken fortune of the beſt of maſters"——"Riſe, my good Philip," ſaid Monſieur Bruyere, greatly affected, "your kindneſs and fidelity I ſet a juſt value on; but I muſt now learn to be independent, to ſupply my own frugal wants, and ſerve thoſe I love." "And how ſerve them," cried his faithful ſervant, tears flowing down his cheeks, "how are you and madame to attend thoſe dear children? Ah! you may refuſe, you may diſmiſs me, but I will trace your footſteps, never will I forſake you, never endure the pain of uncertainty, or live to doubt of your ſafety."

This effuſion of grateful affection completely ſubdued the fortitude of his maſter, he could no longer repreſs the agitations of his boſom; "O Philip," exclaimed he, "why will you oppreſs me thus; why add to my diſtreſs by ſuch proofs of attachment as I am unable to reward, and load me with a ſenſe of obligation I never, never can diſcharge! 'Tis now *indeed* I feel the ſtings that poverty inflicts!" "My deareſt, my honoured maſter, forgive your poor ſervant, only admit me to accompany you, whether in a palace, a hovel, or a priſon, if I am with you I ſhall be happy."

"Then have your wiſh, for the preſent we will not part; but leave me now to recover that compoſure your kindneſs has diſturbed." He bowed, and retired with a look of reſpect and gratitude.

"Affectionate creature!" cried Madame Bruyere, "my dear love, he will be moſt uſeful to us." "True," returned he, "if we can reconcile ourſelves to receive ſervices

vices we never can repay, *we* indeed muſt be advantaged by his attendance."

" But come," added he, riſing briſkly, as if ſhaking off a load that oppreſſed him, " come, my Louiſa, we have no time to loſe—we can take nothing but abſolute neceſſaries with us, all ſuperfluities muſt be inſtantly diſpoſed of—employ your women in making the ſelection, then diſcharge them.—I ſhall have a ſimilar employment, for we muſt depart this night."

" To what part of the world?" aſked ſhe mournfully.—" I think towards Switzerland, but I intend ſtopping at Salines; I have there a noble friend, whom I had once the power of obliging in a moſt important affair, the Marquis St. Juliers; we correſponded for ſome time after my marriage; but a large property left to him in Portugal engaged his attention; the intercourſe was interrupted, and never renewed; I believe the fault was mine; I have heard lately that he is returned to a noble reſidence, a caſtle ſituated between Salines

and Mount Jura: I know his fortune is immenſe, his heart good and bounteous, he may be of ſervice to my children; duty to them demands I ſhould make the trial."

This account greatly cheered the ſpirits of Madame Bruyere, it conveyed *hope*, and that, in her ſituation, was a cordial drop to annihilate deſpair.

The activity of Monſieur Bruyere, aſſiſted by his ſervants, and thoſe perſons in the houſe concerned to aid and haſten his departure, enabled him to diſpoſe of all the perſonal property that was uſeleſs, and might impede his journey; the plate and jewels that were not attached to the eſtate he diſpoſed of; all but his lady's jewels, thoſe he had too much delicacy to mention, and ſhe had not offered to ſacrifice.

His ſervants diſcharged, attended only by the faithful Philip, ſtifling his own emotions, and attentive only to conſole and ſupport the depreſſed ſpirits of his beloved wife, he entered the carriage that was to convey him from a manſion he could no longer call his own, from an eſtate

eſtate he had been unjuſtly deprived of, and from all the connections that in the ſunſhine of proſperity had attached themſelves to his fortunes.

The feelings of Madame Bruyere, when the carriage drove from the door, may be more eaſily conceived than expreſſed; ſhe had her huſband and children indeed, but in one fatal hour ſhe had loſt fortune, conſequence, ſplendour, and every thing that was gratifying to the pride of woman: thoſe ſhe loved were deprived of their inheritance, her children were thrown on the world poor and dependent. Under ſuch oppreſſive reflections, ſhe was little capable of profiting by the pious and ſenſible remonſtrances of her huſband; conſolation could not reach her; the fortitude ſhe had ſought to acquire gave way to the miſery that ſhe ſuffered, and the apprehenſion of greater evils yet to come.

Monſieur Bruyere ſaw how fruitleſs were all his endeavours, and therefore addreſſing his children, tried, by their little innocent prattle, to diſperſe the anguiſh that over-

overwhelmed their unhappy mother, and prevent his own ſpirits from ſinking under the preſſure that hung over them.

Their journey was tedious, melancholy, and uncomfortable; it was the beginning of January, the days were ſhort, the roads bad, the accommodations worſe, and the weather unfavourable.

Fatigued and ſpiritleſs, they at length arrived at Salines; here they began to breathe; they were not far from the caſtle of St. Juliers, from the dear friend who in happier days had been indebted for every comfort of life to the friendſhip of Monſieur Bruyere.

The latter indeed felt the repugnance natural to a feeling and noble mind, of appearing in a humiliating ſtate before the man he had obliged; it ſeemed like levying a tax upon his gratitude and generoſity; but (thought he) pecuniary aid I neither want, nor will accept; if his intereſt can ſerve my children, if his ſympathy and friendſhip can ſoften the miſfortunes that bear hard upon my wife, 'tis

a duty

a duty I owe to them not to neglect, or from a falſe pride refuſe, the conſolation he has the power, and I am ſure the inclination to beſtow.—We ſhall have time to look about us, to fix on a plan for our future ſupport, and the advice of a friend in ſuch a momentous buſineſs muſt be of infinite importance in the unſettled and diſtracted ſtate of my mind.

Thus reſolved, the day after his arrival at Salines, having procured a decent lodging for his family, he left Madame Bruyere inſpired with hope, and trembling with impatience for the ſoothings of friendſhip to tranquilize the boſom of her loved huſband; attended by Philip, he was directed to the caſtle St. Julier's. Two hours riding brought him in view of the ſuperb edifice; his heart melted with the recollection of a thouſand pleaſant hours they had paſſed together, the many affecting incidents that had cemented their regard for each other; and he anticipated the pleaſure of his friend in ſeeing one he had ſo dearly loved, ſo often wiſhed for an op-

opportunity to oblige, to prove his friendſhip and gratitude for favours that had eſſentially paved his way to his preſent grandeur.

Ringing at the gates, he had the ſatisfaction to learn the Marquis was at home; he ſent in his name, and followed the ſervant. The maſter of the caſtle flew to meet him, almoſt ſtifled him with embraces.—" A thouſand welcomes my deareſt, beſt of friends; this is a freſh proof of unexampled kindneſs, thus to prevent a viſit it was my duty and intention to pay.—Ah! how I have regretted the interruption of our correſpondence; who on earth is ſo dear to me as yourſelf?"

The grateful and ſuſceptible heart of Monſieur Bruyere overflowed at his eyes; a reception ſo kind and flattering to a mind burthened with recent diſtreſſes, had an inſtantaneous effect upon his feelings; returning with friendly warmth the embrace that delighted him, " My dear Marquis," ſaid he, " you know not how ſeaſonable, how truly welcome your kindneſs is at this mo-

moment; I am not diſappointed in my opinion of your heart; I left my wife and children at Salines whilſt I flew to viſit the friend of my youth."

"Wife and children!" repeated the Marquis with an air of aſtoniſhment, "but I entreat they may be ſent for; in this country they muſt think of no other houſe but mine."—"O," exclaimed his friend, "'tis now that I pardon my enemies, and ceaſe to accuſe the injuſtice of Fortune, ſince my misfortunes have diſcovered to me the invaluable bleſſing of a true friend. No, I will no longer repine at poverty and unmerited diſgrace, ſince a heart like your's participates in all that afflicts me, and can turn from me the arrows of adverſity."

"You ſurpriſe me," returned the Marquis, "let us be ſeated; explain to me, I beſeech you, what you mean by diſgrace, poverty, and adverſity."

"You know, my dear friend, that the rank my father held in the army, and the munificence of his diſpoſition, left me

at

at his early death little more than a reſpectable name, and good family connections.—My uncle, the late Count de Thouloufe, received me as his ſon, educated and loved me as ſuch, and, at his death, bequeathed to me all his fortune, except one ſmall eſtate to his nephew, the Count de Themirez, the ſon of his ſiſter. All this you are perfectly acquainted with, but you knew not, I believe, that my uncle was ſecretly a proteſtant; that he had inſtilled into me the ſame principles in my youth, and that as I grew to riper years my prejudices in favour of that religion were fixed and confirmed.

"We were not called into public ſituations; we enjoyed our own opinions without noiſe, and without ſeeking to influence others; and ſoon after the death of my revered uncle I married Mademoiſelle Deletre, whoſe beauty and ſweetneſs of temper had the additional charm of being deſcended from a family who were not bigots. We knew we were looked upon with a jealous eye by many; Mary de Medicis, the Queen Regent,

Regent hated the whole ſect, and the choice of Cardinal Richelieu for her miniſter ſealed our ruin.

" My couſin, the Count Themirez, is a zealous catholic; he had been much diſſatisfied with my uncle's will, and though he behaved outwardly civil to us, though his own fortune was ſuperior to our's, yet Malice and Envy could not reſt content without depriving us of what he knew we were legally entitled to.

" Little dreaming of the ſtorm that threatened us, bleſt with two children that added a thouſand ſweets to a happy union of hearts and ſentiments; we enjoyed ſupreme felicity, and indulged ourſelves in fond chimeras of ſeeing our beloved children grow up reſpectable and happy. From this pleaſing illuſion we were ſuddenly rouzed by information that the Count had commenced a law ſuit againſt me to recover the whole of my uncle's property, bequeathed to me as the ſon of his brother, as the child of his heart.

" At firſt I laughed at the folly of ſuch a fu-

a futile attempt, and was perſuaded the claim muſt fall to the ground; I found, however, he was ſerious, and had employed every engine to carry his point: it then became me, in duty to my family, to reſiſt ſuch a flagrant injuſtice; and I had not the ſmalleſt doubt of my ſucceſs. The day of trial came; I heard he had powerful ſupporters; I could not conceive who of rank or conſequence would appear in a cauſe that was inſtituted in direct violation of every legal right.

" Judge of my aſtoniſhment and confuſion when informed, in open court, that my uncle was known to be a proteſtant, and that myſelf and my family were ſuſpected of maintaining the ſame pernicious tenets; that conſequently no act of his would be ſanctioned by the laws, and that my claims adduced from heirſhip were not allowable on the ſame principle, therefore the whole property of the late Count de Thoulouſe was adjudged to the Count of Themirez, the ſon of his ſiſter, and a catholic.

" Be-

" Before I had recovered from this ſtroke of cruel power and injuſtice, I was farther given to underſtand, that, as an enemy to the religion of the country, I was no longer permitted to reſide in it, but was ordered to leave Paris within twenty-four hours, and the kingdom in as many days, on pain of impriſonment and death. I was allowed to take all my perſonals, but nothing more, and an exempt with guards were ordered to take poſſeſſion of the houſe, to enforce the orders of the ſtate.

" Thunderſtruck at ſuch unlooked-for oppreſſion and misfortunes, I could not find words to expreſs the tumults of my ſoul; and when recovered from a temporary ſuſpenſion of my faculties, I found myſelf alone with the guards who waited to attend me to that houſe ſo unjuſtly wreſted from me.

" Going out, I was met by a ſlight acquaintance, a gentleman I had ſometimes ſeen in parties—' Ah! monſieur,' ſaid he, ' you are a victim to power; the Cardinal

Cardinal has been told of your private opinions, and that ſealed your ruin: *he* ſupported your couſin, *he* ordered the ſentence of baniſhment.—Heaven bleſs you!' added he, 'haſten from hence, do not delay an hour beyond your allotted time.'

"I now fully comprehended the whole buſineſs; the Count's lady was related to Cardinal Richelieu, they had intereſted him in their favour, and his hatred to the proteſtants was gratified in making me a ſacrifice.

"The ſentence was irrevocable—I obeyed the cruel mandate; and thus baniſhed, deprived of my property, without money or friends, you ſee me before you. Were *I* only the ſufferer, the evil would be comparatively light, my ſword ſhould carve out *my* fortune; but when I think on my dear Louiſa and my children, I own myſelf a coward; to leave them friendleſs and unprotected is impoſſible, and I have not ſufficient to ſupport them with any decency for more than two or

three years by the ſale of every ſuperfluous article I could collect.

" I have ſome thoughts of retiring into Switzerland; I came to claim the benefit of your advice: moſt happily I heard of your return, and from my ſoul thank you for a reception ſo kind as to have cauſed a ſuſpenſion of ſorrow, and to inſpire me with hope, as I have not met " *An old friend with a new face.*"

Had Monſieur Bruyere lengthened his little narrative for an hour more, he would have met with no interruption from his good friend, who liſtened with all the marks of ſurpriſe, vexation, and perplexity. Finding he was ſilent, and waited for a reply—" Believe me," ſaid he, " my dear friend, I am inexpreſſibly ſhocked at your misfortunes, and the malice of your enemies; your intention of reſiding in Switzerland I greatly approve of, and, when there, depend upon every aſſiſtance from me that you can wiſh for.—But you do not mean to purſue your journey immediately?" " No," replied Monſieur Bruyere,

Bruyere, " I have yet a fortnight good to remain in France, that time I devote to you my dear Marquis. O, your friendſhip is a balm to my heart, I will myſelf return to bring my darling wife and her little cherubs, with one faithful ſervant—*ſhe* will thank you for us all."

The Marquis ordered his carriage for their accommodation, the tranſported huſband flew back, in raptures related his ſucceſs, and boaſted of the uncommon goodneſs of his grateful friend. Madame Bruyere heard him with delight, her heart was there before her, and when ſhe arrived at the caſtle, ſhe received the ſalute of the Marquis with joy and affection. He was ſtruck by her beauty and graceful perſon, the children were handſome and ſweetly engaging; all were received with kindneſs, all were charmed with their reception, and delighted with their generous hoſt.

Two days paſſed away in ſuch a reciprocity of eſteem and friendſhip, that the hours flew winged with pleaſure, their misfortunes were ſcarcely remembered, ſo

earneſt

earneſt was the Marquis to obliterate them by his attentions and friendly offers.

Monſieur Bruyere one morning embracing his lady with an expreſſion in his countenance that denoted ſomething more than common, occupied his mind; informed her that his dear friend had been making a propoſal to him ſo kind, ſo evidently calculated for their intereſt; that though certainly attended with a painful ſacrifice, yet, as it would be a temporary one, and the advantages reſulting from the propoſal would be permanent; he ought not to heſitate, and he hoped his dear Louiſa would be reconciled to it.

Alarmed at this preface, "What is it," ſaid ſhe, "you have to diſcloſe, of what nature was this propoſal, can you doubt my ready acquieſcence with your wiſhes?" "I do not ſay it meets my *wiſhes*," anſwered he, "becauſe for a time, it will ſeparate me from my Louiſa." "How!" cried ſhe, "ſeparate! My dear Bruyere all misfortunes are light, in compariſon of that evil; let me not be deprived of your ſociety, and I will

ſubmit with fortitude to the rigor of our fortune."

Her tears penetrated to his heart, but aſſuming a fortitude he did not feel; "Heaven knows," ſaid he, "how dear you are to my ſoul, how painfully I feel the neceſſity of acceding to a plan that muſt inflict ſorrow upon you, though eventually it muſt be productive of happineſs to us both. Are we my dear Louiſa to conſider only our own gratification, have we not children, can we ſit down contented with poverty, and leave them heirs only to misfortunes? Subject to the contempt of the unfeeling proſperous; ſhall we live to ſee thoſe children ſilently, by their looks reproaching our inactivity and ſupineneſs which has drawn upon them all the evils of want, diſtreſs, and ſcorn, from the rich and great? No, my love, no, I am ſure your heart never could ſupport the ſelf-reproach of neglecting the intereſts of your children."

"Well," ſaid ſhe, in a tremulous voice,

"ſpeak,

"ſpeak, I will learn to ſubmit, to bear all that our misfortunes can inflict."

"I told you," ſaid Monſieur Bruyere, "that our friend ſome few years back had been called to Liſbon to ſhare in a noble fortune ſince left to him by an uncle; he reſided there a conſiderable time after his death. Some affairs of conſequence recalled him to France, and will detain him here. He wiſhes for a friend to reſide in Liſbon and take care of his eſtates, one of which he generouſly offers to make over to me, and my heirs for ever, if I will accept the truſt and ſuperintendance of the other; he does not expect I ſhould decide at once upon ſettling there; he is deſirous that I ſhould go over, view the country, the inhabitants, and judge for myſelf.

"Mean time, during my abſence, you and my children are to remain here under his protection: this moſt generous of friends, will treat you nobly, and ſhould things not prove agreeable to my wiſhes and expectations, I can but return and

endeavour to adopt ſome other plan for our ſupport.

"But," ſaid ſhe haſtily, "if you *do* like it, how am I to join you?" "I ſhall at all events return in a ſhort time," anſwered he, "and accompany you and my dear children myſelf.—Think not, added he, embracing her, that I will truſt my only treaſures to the care of others."

"Ah!" cried ſhe, after a little pauſe, "could he not, if he loved you as a friend, do ſome eſſential ſervice to you without ſending you to ſuch a diſtance?"

"Diſtance from what, or from whom?" aſked he, "Have we now any country or friends, is not Portugal equally as eligible for us as Switzerland, or any other country? And ſhall we ungratefully object to a plan that will leſſen our ſenſe of obligation for what we poſſeſs by his generoſity, by the more than poſſibility, that we muſt have the power of ſerving *him*?"

"I give all due credit," ſaid ſhe, "to his generoſity, though if I am not miſtaken

the favours you once conferred on the Marquis, leſſens the magnitude of our obligations: however, let me *now* accompany you, and I have not a ſhadow of an objection."

"Impoſſible," returned he, "I muſt have many things to attend to, on firſt going over, many accommodations neceſſary to procure for you, and our darlings; do not diſpute the point my dear Louiſa, do not aſk what to refuſe tortures my ſoul; but think *I* do not, *cannot* feel leſs than you do, though I ſhould neglect an important ſacred duty, if I ſuffered my feelings to ſuperſede reaſon and judgment."

"I have done," ſaid ſhe, ſighing, "I reſt confident in your tenderneſs and honour, and know that I ought to ſubmit to what you approve." She roſe from her chair and retired to a boudoir, that ſhe might freely indulge thoſe emotions ſhe could no longer ſuppreſs.

That evening, the Marquis enumerated all the manifold advantages that would

accrue to Monſieur Bruyere from his reſidence in Liſbon; painted the beauty of the country, the friendlineſs of the natives, in the moſt glowing colours: the diſtance was trifling, his friends abſence would be ſhort before he returned for his family; and in the courſe of two or three years, he hoped to pay them a viſit, and to enjoy the ſupreme ſatisfaction of ſeeing them perfectly happy. Madame Bruyere could ſay but little, her ſpirits ſunk, and her heart ſeemed to forebode evil, whenever this *ſeparation* came acroſs her mind, and was it poſſible ſhe could think on any other ſubject? yet ſhe attempted to look, what her huſband expreſſed, gratitude and hope.

No time was loſt, every preparation haſtened, and every convenience that could be thought on, was procured for his accommodation. Madame Bruyere, after ſome deliberation, ventured to ſuggeſt to her huſband, "that ſhe thought a convent would be a more eligible ſituation for *her*; ſhe could not help feeling," ſhe ſaid,

"ſome

" ſome repugnance as a young woman, though a married one, to reſiding in a houſe in his abſence, where no lady preſided."

He conſidered for ſome moments, " I approve of your delicacy," he replied, " and confeſs, the arrangement would not diſpleaſe me, not my love from any doubts, or want of confidence in you, or my friend; but ſimply becauſe until I can judge of the ſituation, I would not wiſh to encreaſe my weight of obligation; yet much leſs would I hurt the feelings of the Marquis. I will ſpeak to him on the ſubject, and if he does not violently diſapprove of your wiſhes, they will meet with no oppoſition from me."

On their next meeting Monſieur Bruyere informed his lady that the Marquis had warmly oppoſed her intention, " if *his* company was diſagreeable, he would with pleaſure remove the cauſe of her objection, and leave the caſtle till his friend's return; but never would he conſent that the lady of Monſieur Bruyere,

the beſt and deareſt friend he had in the world, ſhould have any other reſidence than his caſtle, where ſhe was entitled by every tie of gratitude to hold the ſupreme command; and he was grieved to the ſoul that the cruel proſcription againſt his friend, deprived him of the inexpreſſible happineſs, he ſhould have experienced in offering him an aſylum for life under his own roof." "Such," continued Monſieur Bruyere, "was the language held by the Marquis, judge therefore if we can conſiſtently perſevere in the plan you purpoſed."

"I ſee," anſwered ſhe, "that I muſt relinquiſh it, and however repugnant to my feelings, muſt remain where I am. Heaven grant your abſence may be ſhort, do not prolong your ſtay beyond what abſolute neceſſity requires, for I ſhall know no peace 'till you return.

He did not heſitate to aſſure her that he would expedite his buſineſs with all poſſible celerity, as no pleaſure could reach him in any ſhape 'till reunited to his family.

family. With this aſſurance ſhe endeavoured to tranquillize her mind, and prepare for the hour of parting with ſome appearance of fortitude.

The day came, the Marquis had requeſted him to take his own ſervant Philip, with one of his; as every domeſtic in his houſe would be at the devotion of Madame; but Philip, well as he loved his maſter, preferred remaining with his lady; "any ſervant," ſaid he, "can attend you in dreſſing Sir; but every ſervant will not be ſo attached to Madame and the dear children as I am, and I know that in ſerving them I do my duty to you alſo."

Monſieur Bruyere was delighted with the reſolution of Philip, his wife was not leſs ſo; the Marquis did not appear ſo well ſatisfied—"His lady and her family muſt be ſafe and well attended under his roof, but his maſter was going among ſtrangers, where a faithful ſervant would be a treaſure." Philip ſtoutly reſiſted this argument, and having his maſter on his

ſide, he conquered, and remained at the caſtle.

Madame Bruyere ſaw her huſband depart with inexpreſſible anguiſh, which ſhe vainly fought to hide, that ſhe might not appear ungrateful for the zealous endeavours of the Marquis to divert her attention; but a ſad foreboding hung about her mind; and when ſhe loſt ſight of him, ſhe lifted her eyes to heaven and ſilently implored its protection of a beloved huſband, and her dear children.

The Marquis appeared to ſympathize in her feelings, he led her back to the ſaloon, "Conſider yourſelf as in your own caſtle my dear lady, all here are devoted to you; my much valued friend will ſoon return, and I have little doubt, perfectly to your ſatisfaction. Reflect," continued he, obſerving her emotions, "that your enemies are too powerful to contend with, too prejudiced and intereſted, ever to relent; what could you do in Switzerland, or in any country without money, unknown and

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diſregarded? the ſpirit of my dear Bruyere revolted againſt pecuniary obligations; he muſt then have gone into the army, muſt inevitably have been ſeparated from you; my plan will place him in a comfortable independence, will gratify his noble mind by rendering ſervices to his friend, and except this very temporary abſence, you will no more be ſeparated from each other."

Madame Bruyere was ſtruck by this forcible reaſoning, which admitted of no contradiction, ſhe felt as if ſhe muſt appear ungrateful to ſo zealous a friend, and inſtantly ſought to ſtifle her heartfelt grief, and aſſume a placidity of countenance more conſonant to what ſhe owed the Marquis for his kindneſs. "Forgive me, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "if at this trying moment I ſeem to forget my obligations to you; 'tis the firſt time we ever knew the pang of parting; heaven grant it may be the laſt." "Doubt it not," replied he, "think only that this ſhort ſeparation muſt eventually preclude you from feeling

any future pain of a ſimilar kind:" ſhe bowed with a grateful look, and retired to her children.

A boy of eight years old, and a girl of ſeven, were all their offspring left out of five: Henry was the counterpart of his father, open hearted, generous, and candid, with a quick conception, and a warm ſuſceptible heart; young as he was, he gave traits of an excellent diſpoſition, though rather tinctured with haughtineſs and paſſion, which it had been the conſtant endeavour of his father, who was his preceptor, to modify, yet not extinguiſh; as he conceived, a certain degree of a noble independent ſpirit, would be a barrier againſt mean and unworthy actions; at the ſame time that he wiſhed to curb a violent and too preſumptuous turn, that might feed a proud mind, and render it inſolent, often times unjuſt.

Henrietta was one of the loveliеſt girls ever ſeen, at ſo early an age, when the features are ſcarce formed, and little expreſſion can be conveyed into the countenance; ſhe

ſhe was conſtitutionally good-natured, mild, and affectionate to thoſe ſhe loved; but, like her brother, quick and ſuſceptible. She doated on her parents, particularly on her mother, who was her conſtant companion: her docility, ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, and an uncommon attention in one ſo young, had greatly endeared her to Monſieur and Madame Bruyere; ſhe was the idol of both, nor was there leſs affection between the little brother and his ſiſter.

Children in France, from their mode of education, perhaps too from the natural vivacity, and lively conception, for which that nation was ever remarkable, have certainly many advantages over the children of other countries. 'Till of late years, you ſaw children of three feet high, both in their dreſs and manners ape their parents and inſtructors, who ſeldom checked their vivacity till they were ſent to the uſual ſeminaries for education. Where young females, after droning through a few years in a convent, were taken out to be married, perfectly unacquainted with ſociety and manners,

manners, and moſt frequently entirely indifferent to the man to whom they gave their hand.

Madame Bruyere was of a more thinking turn than many of her ſex, ſhe had known her huſband only one fortnight before ſhe was married; on his ſide, it was a match of inclination, for he had been captivated with her at firſt ſight. On *her* part it was a union entered into by command of her parents, and with the moſt perfect indifference for the object of their choice; but in a very ſhort time the virtues and tenderneſs of her huſband, made a deep impreſſion on her heart; every day unfolded to her new excellencies in his mind, freſh proofs of the warmeſt affection; admiration and gratitude took poſſeſſion of her ſoul, it inſpired the tendereſt ſentiments, it influenced every action of her life. A love the moſt fervent and permanent engroſſed every idea, and a wiſh to deſerve, and poſſeſs the continuance of his affection and eſteem, was the prevailing feature in her character.

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She was an example to counteract the too prevailing notion among young women, that they muſt be violently *in love*, as it is called, previous to their marriage; when experience too generally proves, that a paſſion grounded on fancy, where the eye often miſleads the judgment, rarely is productive of the expected happineſs.—All violent paſſions, all exceſſive fervors, muſt and will ſubſide; and thoſe two paſſionate lovers, who frequently break through every barrier of duty, decorum, and modeſty, to gratify their inclinations, who enter into the marriage ſtate, with the ſanguine hopes of enjoying the moſt tranſporting and unceaſing felicity, are very ſoon amazed, diſappointed, and diſguſted, to find thoſe ardors cool, to find that "beauty grows familiar" to the huſband's eye, and that, without good ſenſe, diſcretion, and a well-founded eſteem, all that violent paſſion evaporates, ſinks into indifference, and too often terminates in contempt and averſion.

Madame Bruyere happily had ſubmitted

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to the judgment of her parents, having no prepoſſeſſions, and from the excellent character attached to the object of their choice, could form no reaſonable objection. In conforming to her duty, and the dictates of reaſon, ſhe found her own happineſs eſtabliſhed upon a ſolid foundation; every freſh day brought with it an encreaſe of love and eſteem, becauſe every day afforded ſome freſh occaſion to obſerve in each other ſuch amiable qualities, ſuch a congeniality of ſentiment in all things that were great and good, that the moſt perfect harmony and affection, the moſt liberal confidence, ſubſiſted between them.

She often bleſſed the tender prudence of her parents, who had proved themſelves the beſt judges for her happineſs; and Monſieur Bruyere, whilſt *they* lived (which was only three years after their marriage) loved and revered that excellent man and woman, to whoſe precepts, examples, and preference in *his* favour, he was indebted for the greateſt of all earthly bleſſings, a good and virtuous wife.

Such

Such were the happy pair now oppreſſed by misfortunes and arbitrary power, and for the firſt time *ſeparated* ſince their marriage; Madame Bruyere ſought conſolation in the endearments of her children; not that ſhe avoided the kind endeavours of the Marquis to amuſe her, on the contrary, ſhe felt it a duty incumbent on her to *ſeem* gratified, though her heart correſponded not with her looks.

Near a week had paſſed ſince the departure of her huſband, when one day the Marquis acquainted her that he had written to a female relation of his to entreat her company, preſuming ſuch an arrangement would be deſirable to Madame Bruyere. He had not mentioned it, leſt his wiſhes might have been diſappointed, but a letter juſt received, informed him, the lady accepted his invitation, and hoped to pay her reſpects to his charming friend in a very few days.

Madame was extremely pleaſed with this delicate attention, and charmed with the idea of having a female companion; ſhe

ſhe thanked him in the moſt lively terms for this freſh proof of his attentive conſideration; the gratitude of her heart ſparkled in her eyes, ſhe never looked more truly beautiful, and the Marquis gave a proof that he thought ſo, ſince he could not refrain from teſtifying his admiration by more than looks, by an exclamation that ſeemed to burſt ſpontaneous from the heart—"Ah! how trifling are the perſecutions of fortune, the malice of enemies, or pecuniary difficulties; how light in the balance, weighed againſt the exquiſite happineſs my loved friend poſſeſſes in ſuch a wife! Can he be poor, who boaſts of ſuch an ineſtimable treaſure!"

Madame Bruyere fluſhed at this paſſionate ſally, it hurt the delicacy of her feelings, but without accepting the compliment, ſhe coolly replied; "A good wife may certainly by her tenderneſs *blunt* the arrows of adverſity, though ſhe cannot *turn* them, from wounding a beloved huſband; the band of real affection is drawn cloſer by misfortunes; minds that aſſimilate, derive

rive comfort from reciprocal tenderneſs; but, alas! there are objects ſtill more intereſting, becauſe more helpleſs, that lay ſtrong hold on the feelings of a parent, and render the perſecutions of fortune, the proſpect of poverty, ſources of real miſery, to hearts of ſuſceptibility."

"All apprehenſions of the latter, my deareſt madam, you muſt henceforth drive far from your ideas; *my* fortune is devoted to *you*; moſt unhappily for a time my affairs will compel me to remain in France, where my beſt friend cannot be, but I ſhall think it an age till I can join you in Liſbon, and paſs the remainder of my days in your charming ſociety."

It was impoſſible but that Madame Bruyere muſt feel the warmeſt ſenſe of gratitude, which ſhe expreſſed in terms the moſt flattering to the Marquis, and the exceſſive fondneſs which he ſeemed to have for her children, cauſed her heart to glow with true maternal ſenſibility. She had that evening the further delight of receiving a letter from her beloved huſband, who was

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on his journey in perfect health, and with no other regret than the pain of ſeparation from his much loved family.

This letter, ſo valued, was a cordial to her ſpirits more deſirable and efficacious than all the delicacies and unwearied attentions to amuſe her, that her friend provided.—She endeavoured to devote as much of her time, as good breeding and gratitude would admit of, to her darling children; ſhe was now their only preceptreſs, and ſtrictly inculcated the leſſons of her much loved huſband.

She was engaged one morning in this moſt delightful employment, when a meſſage from the Marquis informed her, "He was eager to introduce the Counteſs Dulay to the honour of her notice." She roſe immediately, and followed the ſervant to the ſaloon, at the door of which ſhe was met by the Marquis, who led her to his new gueſt.

Madame Bruyere ſtarted, as he flatteringly preſented her in the higheſt terms of praiſe to a lady, who appeared to be advancing

vancing to the meridian of life, corpulent and maſculine; ſhe had the traits of much beauty, but it was upon a large ſcale, more commanding than pleaſing; large black eyes, bold and aſſuming, ſeemed to ſcrutinize and take in every ſentiment of the heart; a gay air, and the moſt ridiculous extravagance in a very ſhewy dreſs, for one juſt come off a journey, altogether ſtruck Madame Bruyere with a repulſive diſguſt, that made her ſtart and ſhrink from the free embrace of the Counteſs.

"I have a thouſand obligations to my good couſin," ſaid ſhe, gaily, "for the pleaſure of meeting a lady ſo truly amiable; I expect we ſhall ſoon be very great friends, and we ſhall put his taſte and gallantry to the teſt, that he may find amuſements ſuitable to the gueſts he has the honour to entertain."

"Doubt not my inclination or zeal," returned he, in the ſame tone, "you may find defects in my taſte, but depend upon it you will have no cauſe to blame my inattention." "I am already obliged

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to the Marquis for every accommodation to the extent of *my wiſhes*," ſaid Madame Bruyere, " nor can I ever want amuſements beyond what I experience in the ſociety of a friend, and the endearments of my children."

" What! you have children then! how greatly I am delighted; this is a new pleaſure the Marquis forgot to mention; I abſolutely doat on children." How eaſy for a penetrating woman to develope the ſentiments of an ingenuous mind! Madame Bruyere, without guile or diſſimulation, felt a diſguſt on the firſt view of this lady which politeneſs could not cover from the ſearching eye of the other; but this little ſally, this fondneſs for children, reached the heart of a tender mother, cauſed her to look with a more favourable glance on the ſpeaker, and whiſper to herſelf, " An affectionate heart towards children cannot be a bad one."

Her looks aſſumed a kinder aſpect, as ſhe replied, " My children are not very young, Madam, though not old enough

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to appear in company." "O," cried the Marquis, "your Henrietta is abſolutely a little angel, ſhe is the exact copy of her charming mother!" "Indeed," returned the Counteſs, "then I long to ſee her; will you indulge me, Madame?"

Madame Bruyere ordered the children to attend her; they ſoon came, and entered the room with ſuch perfect grace, and reſpectful politeneſs, that the Counteſs appeared to be in raptures; ſhe embraced, careſſed, and praiſed them to ſuch an exceſs, that the young folks were confounded, and their mother diſpleaſed. She had ever carefully avoided giving them an idea that their *perſons* entitled them to any approbation; they knew not that they were more "beautiful and charming" than other young people of their age; they had been accuſtomed to praiſe only as they performed their ſeveral duties well; were diligent in their taſks, and affectionate to each other. The extravagant encomiums of the Counteſs cauſed them to look at each other, and inſpired new ideas of perſonal

ſonal advantages, they had never once thought of, till thus careſſed and praiſed by her.

The good ſenſe of Madame Bruyere taught her the neceſſity of counteracting the poiſon ſhe perceived had already infected them; ſhe commanded them to withdraw, and addreſſing the Counteſs with a very ſerious air—" However gratifying to the feelings of a mother, you will pardon me, Madam, if I entreat you to be more ſparing of your obliging expreſſions in the preſence of my children; they are unaccuſtomed to hear ſuch flattering encomiums on their perſons: I wiſh to have them ſenſible, diligent, and well-informed; to have ſentiments of virtue and honour firmly engrafted in their boſoms before they go into public: whatever ſphere of life Providence may deſign for them, if integrity and conſcious honour ſupports them, they will be enabled to ſtruggle through a deceitful and turbulent world; but if the ſeeds of vanity, preſumption, and its general concomitants, inſo-

inſolence and inactivity, are permitted to take root, and encouraged in their growth by approbation from perſons of your conſequence, young minds can ſeldom reſiſt the enchanting deluſion of flattery, and all my wiſhes and endeavours may prove vain and fruitleſs."

"Good heaven, Madame!" exclaimed the Counteſs, "one would ſuppoſe you intended to exclude them from the ſight of mankind; for unleſs you purpoſe placing them in convents for life, can you imagine they will go into the world without being told a thouſand times of their perſonal charms—without being conſcious, by compariſon, of their ſuperior advantages?"

"Heaven only knows," replied Madame Bruyere with a ſigh, "what ſtation in life it may be their fortune to be placed in; *my* expectations for them are extremely moderate; I am therefore the more deſirous to repreſs every idea that may tend to vanity or ambition, to cultivate the good traits that unfold themſelves

as their knowledge expands, and at leaſt lay the foundation for ſuch virtues as may and muſt be their ſupport whether in affluence or adverſity."

"Well," returned the Counteſs, "I will ſtrive to ſuppreſs any audible marks of my admiration before them, but you muſt allow me to tell you, Madame, that I *think* them the moſt beautiful, graceful children I ever ſaw, and doubt not but their future rank in ſociety will be a brilliant one." "*I* will venture to pronounce," ſaid the Marquis briſkly, "that your conjectures will be realized, ſince I pledge myſelf to take care of their fortunes, if I may be permitted the happineſs of proving my gratitude and affection to their beloved father."

The heart of Madame Bruyere was deeply penetrated by ſuch kindneſs, ſhe ſtrove by an uncommon exertion of ſpirits to prove her ſenſibility, and not throw a cloud over the vivacity of her friends. The Counteſs was ſo particularly attentive, and had ſo completely done away the diſ-

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guſt of her firſt appearance by the fondneſs ſhe expreſſed for her children, and ſubſequent behaviour, that when retired for the night Madame Bruyere accuſed herſelf of illiberality and want of generoſity in giving way to an unjuſt firſt-ſight impreſſion.

The Counteſs appeared to have lived in the gay world, to have mixed with lively ſociety, and, allowing for conſtitutional gaity, there was nothing reprehenſible in her manners, and to judge unfavourably from the expreſſion of her eyes was certainly uncandid: thus condemning herſelf, ſhe was diſpoſed to atone for her error by a reſolution to cultivate the good graces of her new acquaintance, and ſhew her all poſſible attention.

Several days paſſed in the moſt zealous endeavours on the part of the Marquis to entertain his gueſts; entertainments and company crouded upon them continually; the Counteſs ſeemed delighted with him, and ſtudied to obtain the friendſhip and confidence of Madam Bruyere; the latter

was not inſenſible to her kindneſs, or the kind exertions of the Marquis, but ſhe began to be uneaſy that no further intelligence came from her huſband: as the days ſucceeded each other, her ſpirits began to decline, and at length, in ſpite of her endeavours to conceal it, her uneaſineſs became very viſible, and infected all parties.

"I ſee," ſaid the Marquis one evening, "my charming friend, that anxiety preys upon your heart, but do not be alarmed I beſeech you; many cauſes, without accidents, may have impeded the accompliſhment of our wiſhes; a very ſhort time will bring you the deſired letter—all things muſt be well, and both religion and good ſenſe ſhould inſpire you with hope and patience." "Alas!" cried ſhe, "I have already borne much; and the ſufferer by unjuſt perſecutions may ſurely ſtand excuſed, if impatience ſometimes forgets the duty of reſignation and truſt in the Divine Will.—Conſider, my Lord, I have now but one hold on earth for the

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ſupport of my children——" "How, Madame!" ſaid he, interrupting her, "am *I* then of no eſtimation—of no conſequence in your eyes? Have I not ſaid—have I not ſworn to protect you, and the dear angels committed to my care? Yes, to my loved and reſpectable friend I vowed that your intereſts ſhould be mine, and that in me his dear children ſhould find a ſecond father."

Madam Bruyere thanked the generous Marquis more by her tears than by words, though the little ſhe did ſay ſatisfied him. "For goodneſs ſake," cried the Counteſs, "let us have done with this dolorous diſcourſe; I hate to anticipate evil, or meet ſorrow half-way: Why not enjoy the preſent hour? Are there not days, weeks, and months enough in the year to grieve in—vexations enough realized to diſturb our peace, without going out of the way to ſeek for them in the chimeras of our brain?"

"I came here," added ſhe, "to amuſe and to receive amuſement, and will not

be diſappointed: Come," ſaid ſhe to the Marquis, "tell us what plan you have deſigned for to-morrow; this has been a bad day, and given us the ſpleen; but the moon has now burſt through the thick clouds that obſcured her glories, ſhe ſhines divinely over the face of nature, and gives expectation of a brighter ſky to-morrow.—Say, what will you do for us?" "Will you have muſic in the gardens," aſked he, "or will you make an excurſion to Mount Jura, view the proſpects, and viſit the hermit's cell?"

"Really," anſwered ſhe languidly, "your entertainments have no great variety in them; I am almoſt tired of muſic, and there cannot be much pleaſure in climbing mountains, or ſeeing the dwellings of hermits.—What think you, Madame?" "Indeed," replied Madame Bruyere, "I have no voice in the buſineſs, but ſhall be happy to attend you any where."

"You are a charming creature," anſwered the Counteſs, "and want only a little

little more vivacity to be quite an angel: however, 'tis very well that you have ſome *one* deficiency, or I know not what would become of mankind——Apropos, Marquis, don't you expect viſitors ſoon?" "In leſs than a week," he replied, "I hope to introduce to you the Chevalier Serac, his ſiſter, and Monſieur le Grand; I flatter myſelf they will aſſiſt me in ſtriking out amuſements more adapted to your taſte." "You are a civil creature, upon the whole," ſaid ſhe, "and therefore, if the weather is fine, we will go to Mount Jura to-morrow." This was agreed to, and the Counteſs ſeemed to acquire a freſh ſtock of ſpirits from the pleaſing expectation of more company being ſo ſoon expected.

Not ſo Madame Bruyere, when ſhe retired to her apartments after viſiting her children's, a duty ſhe never omitted, the idea of more viſitors, freſh ſcenes of gaiety, and the natural demand that would be made upon her ſpirits to join in their parties, were little calculated to afford her

pleaſure, and but ill accorded with the painful apprehenſions that crouded upon her mind. How gladly would *ſhe* have choſen ſolitude and the endearments of her children, in preference to all the gaiety and amuſements the Counteſs was ſo fond of.

Alas! thought ſhe, ſhe has no huſband —no fortune to lament the loſs of; no children proſcribed, and unprovided for; ſhe knows not—cannot feel, the anxiety that wrings my heart for the ſafety and ſucceſs of a beloved huſband, parent, and friend, on whom we all depend.—"Gracious heaven!" ſaid ſhe with fervour, "protect, bleſs, and preſerve him.—— Whatever may be our future lot, with *him* we can ſuffer every evil thy all-diſpoſing will may ordain us to feel with patience and reſignation: there is only one that can be inſupportable: Great God avert that, and I bow to thy decrees!"

She paſſed a reſtleſs night, diſturbed by many painful and fantaſtic viſions, that left a ſad impreſſion upon her mind, and ſhe

ſhe aroſe with a dejection of ſpirits ſhe could neither conquer nor diſguiſe. When ſhe met her friends, the Counteſs ſent forth an exclamation, the Marquis looked concerned at her ſtile of countenance—"Upon my honour," ſaid the former, "my dear Madame, you muſt rub up a little, or you will drive me from you; ſuch is the temperament of my mind, that I cannot bear the leaſt appearance of ſadneſs; and why you ſhould indulge it I know not, when the moſt ſmiling proſpects await you.

"I am ſorry, indeed," anſwered Madame Bruyere, "that my looks are too correſpondent with my feelings; but is it trifling to be ſeparated from the man one fondly loves, to ſay nothing of being ruined in our fortunes, baniſhed from our country, and our children deprived of their rights?—misfortunes ſufficiently oppreſſive to ſtamp the mind with ſorrow, and mark the features with grief."—"But," returned the Counteſs, "when you have a friend powerful and affectionate,

determined to avert from you every dreaded evil, and make large amends for the injuſtice of others, ſurely to indulge diſagreeable retroſpections is very injurious to yourſelf and thoſe who love you."

"Ah! my dear couſin," ſaid the Marquis feelingly, "ceaſe to blame that amiable ſenſibility ſo becoming in your ſex; I may envy the object that cauſes emotions ſo diſtreſſing to thoſe who love and admire Madame, but I cannot condemn the effects that ſpring from ſuch exquiſite tenderneſs. Be it our care to leſſen what we cannot entirely remove from a feeling heart, and I hope a ſhort time will do away every painful apprehenſion."

"I declare," returned the Counteſs, "you are enough to give one the vapours; you would make a mighty pretty ſentimental pair if left to yourſelves.—But I have too much charity to give you up to O's and Ah's, and tragedy ſpeeches: quickly," added ſhe, giving him a ſmart blow on the ſhoulder, "quickly bid that fiend that engenders ſpleen fly far from us, ſend

ſorrow

ſorrow to the winds, and let the laughing loves and graces dance before us, to provoke pleaſure and inſpire delight."

"Upon my word," cried the Marquis ſmiling, "you would be the goddeſs of pleaſure if power equalled your inclinations.—But come, ladies, the carriage waits to convey us to the Mount—and there, my lively couſin, you will have a freſh cauſe of complaint, for pain muſt precede pleaſure, if you will enjoy the proſpects."

"Not the moſt deſirable prelude," ſaid ſhe, "but any thing is preferable to the horrid gravity you and your *kindred ſoul* here would infect me with." They were ſoon at the Mount, and when they found it moſt convenient to leave the carriage, the lively lady began to aſcend the mountain with great agility, leaving the Marquis to take care of Madame Bruyere.

"My amiable friend," ſaid he, "I feel moſt exceedingly for that extreme ſuſceptibility which cauſes you to dread, not indeed *impoſſible*, but very *improbable*

accidents to our beloved Bruyere: pray keep up your ſpirits, the Counteſs may be rather too gay for your preſent frame of mind, but ſhe has a good heart, and very ſincerely admires you." "I am greatly indebted both to the Counteſs and you, my Lord," anſwered ſhe, "for your endeavours to amuſe a very ſpiritleſs companion: it would be the height of ingratitude and ill-breeding if I did not exert myſelf to conquer thoſe fears I cannot altogether repreſs."

They now overtook the nimble lady, who, realiſing the fable of the hare and and tortoiſe, had, by an unneceſſary ſpeed at firſt, fatigued herſelf, and was compelled to reſt till they came up.—"O Lord!" exclaimed ſhe, "I am tired to death, I ſhall never reach the top of the mountain; —Do you call this toil entertaining?" "Certainly," replied the Marquis, "every degree of pleaſure muſt have its concomitant of pain; 'tis only from compariſon we know how to eſtimate our enjoyments."

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"Defend me," cried ſhe, "from ſuch comparative happineſs! I am not accuſtomed to it; and am already ſo fatigued, that I defy you to extract pleaſure out of it." "We ſhall ſee," returned he, ſmiling: "Courage, my good coz, the hermit's cell is not many yards higher." "Well, you have taken me in, and I muſt toil through if I can; but really ſuch an amuſement for delicate females, none but a poor ſentimental philoſopher like you would have thought of."

Madame Bruyere threw a glance on the Counteſs when ſhe uttered the words "delicate females," for no one could have leſs pretenſions to delicacy than that lady: a ſmile ſhe could not ſuppreſs followed the glance. "Good," cried the complainant, "even the gravity of your ſweet friend gives way—even *her* complaiſance cannot extend to giving you credit for your taſte."

"Mighty well, ladies, pray amuſe yourſelves at my expence; but be on your guard, that the tables do not turn againſt you."

you." Thus diverting the time and fatigue, after much labour, and a variety of reproaches and complaints between jeſts and earneſt, they arrived at a winding path that terminated in a thick cluſter of tall trees, and appeared to impede all further progreſs.

"Bleſs me!" again exclaimed the diſcontented lady, "why, is this the enchanting proſpect that is to reward our toilſome peregrinations?" "Even ſo," replied the Marquis advancing; and preſſing back ſome bending branches that ſeemed connected with, and hung over the ſide of a rock they had not till then diſcerned, diſcovered a ſmall opening: "Here, ladies, you may ſafely enter, and ſhall preſently reſt; I doubt much if this ſpot was ever before viſited by any females."

"In my conſcience," returned ſhe, "I believe not; the perilous undertaking was reſerved for thoſe *you* have the goodneſs to conduct." "Nay," ſaid Madame Bruyere, "perils we have had none, and the

the fatigue will be forgotten when we have attained the end of our labour." "O no doubt you will excuſe *your* beau; unhappily I am a ſolitary being—couſins may ſometimes be *uſeful*, but are ſeldom *deſirable*, companions."

Before any reply could be made, they turned into a beautiful green path, ſhaded by a lofty ſhrubbery, then in full flower, and at a diſtance perceived ſomething like a dwelling, nearly covered by greens and flowers.—"What a ſweet place!" exclaimed Madame Bruyere. "I hope the hermitage for our promiſed reſt," added the Counteſs. "Yes," ſaid the Marquis, "your eaſe and good-humour will, I hope, preſently return." The termination of their labour being in view, gave freſh ſpirits and alacrity: they quickened their ſteps, and in a few minutes were at the hermitage, which conſiſted of two rooms: the firſt was all rock-work, lined with moſs and ſhells, with a few narrow apertures, to admit light, without ſuffering inconvenience from the weather; ſeats were

hewn on one ſide, before which a large ſtone block anſwered all the purpoſes of a table. On the oppoſite ſide were a few beautiful flowering ſhrubs fixed in the earth, and diverſified among the ſhells and moſs.

"Well," ſaid the Counteſs, ſeating herſelf, "this is a mighty pretty ſolitary retreat for one weary of the world and its pleaſures, from ſatiety, or inability to enjoy them; but for my part I ſhould die with ennui if obliged to reſide here a week." "And I, on the contrary," returned Madame Bruyere, "could be well content to paſs the remainder of my life here, if bleſſed with the ſociety of thoſe I love." "True, Madame," ſaid the Marquis; "happineſs has little to do with locality, or the frivolity of the world: love and friendſhip may, in its enjoyments, convert a cottage to a palace." "A truce, a truce," exclaimed the lively Counteſs, "don't add to the gloomy ſtill-life of the place by your ſententious ſpeeches, but tell me if *this is all* we have

have to expect as a reward for our fatigue?"

At that moment the ſound of wind-inſtruments were heard, and the moſt enchanting harmony played upon the ear among the thick foliage of the trees. Before the ladies could make any obſervations, the Marquis took a hand of each, and leading them through the opening of the grotto, as if to an adjoining apartment, turned into a narrow covered path, and in the ſame moment their eyes were dazzled with the brilliancy of lights, and the glittering of various ſpars, that emitted a thouſand rays like diamonds, branching from every ſide of a grotto thickly lined with the moſt beautiful ſhells and tranſparent ſpars, moſs, and natural iſicles; matted ſeats were placed round, and in the middle was a white marble baſon, filled with the pureſt water, played by a fountain of ſilver, with ſeveral ſmall branches, that threw the water into a variety of fantaſtic forms: at the top was a ſmall table, covered with every ele-

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gant refreſhment of jellies and fruits, cakes, wines, and cordial; while the wax-lights, interſperſed, threw the ſurrounding tranſparencies into a blaze that the ſight could ſcarcely ſupport. The ladies were overcome with aſtoniſhment and delight: —"Good heaven!" exclaimed the enraptured Counteſs, "why we are ſurely in a fairy palace—this is the land of enchantment!" "Indeed," ſaid Madame Bruyere, "this ſweet place exceeds every thing imagination could form, and is calculated entirely for the reſidence of celeſtial beings."

"And ſuch," returned the Marquis gallantly, "have condeſcended to aſſume terreſtrial ſhapes, and by their preſence conſiderably add to the beauties of the ſcenery." "You are a divine creature," ſaid the Counteſs, "I have no longer any quarrel with you; all my labours are forgotten; this little elyſium is a full recompence for our toils, and I do homage to your taſte: here is every thing that can regale the ſenſes."

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"I feel the full force of the enchantment," added Madame Bruyere; "the faſcination ſteals over mine; and I know not that ever before I was ſo entirely delighted." "Ah!" cried the Marquis, "how abundantly you overpay my feeble exertions to amuſe you, by this flattering approbation; but, to be candid, you are very little indebted to me for the pleaſure you expreſs: the muſic, the trifling refreſhments, the few lights, and a ſilver caſe over the leaden pipes, are the only additions made by me to the natural beauties of this ſweet retreat."

"Is it really uninhabited?" aſked Madame Bruyere. "It is," he replied; "and has been for a long time I believe. On taking poſſeſſion of my eſtate, my ſteward one day informed me of this hermitage, formerly the reſidence of a good hermit, whom he had ſeen twice, but who had ſuddenly diſappeared, and never returned. I was charmed with the ſituation; and frequently walk here, to indulge contemplation, and enjoy the beautiful proſpects."

pects." "Proſpects!" repeated the Counteſs; "we are ſo immerſed in woods and trees, that no diſtant view can meet our ſight."

"Remember," ſaid he, ſmiling, "this is fairy-land, and therefore you muſt prepare yourſelves to meet many unexpected faſcinations: but, for the preſent, I entreat you to take ſome refreſhments."—"And liſten to the muſic," added Madame Bruyere; "I really feel myſelf in Paradiſe; ſuch a perfect tranquillity reigns in my boſom." "Heaven grant," ſaid the Marquis with fervour, "that peace and happineſs may ever dwell there; my endeavours to promote it will end but with my life."

Madame bluſhed at the warmth of his words, the energy of his voice, and the ſpeaking look that accompanied it: ſhe bowed, but ſpoke not.

"You dear ſentimental devils!" cried the Counteſs, "would you wiſh to deſtroy the delightful illuſion of our preſent enjoyments, by your grave faces, and fine-

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drawn phraſes.—Pr'ythee have done with compliments, and tell me if this elegant repaſt ever could have been ſo refreſhing as now, when fatigue, and unexpected pleaſure, give a double reliſh to theſe delicacies?"

"You allow then," ſaid Madame Bruyere, "that *there are* delights in retirement, of which you had no idea?" "With *novelty* to recommend it," anſwered ſhe; "but were I to be told I muſt take up my reſidence here for a month, adieu to all its delights, the veil would be withdrawn, this little fairy apartment would appear ſtript of all its beauties, and converted in my ideas to little better than a gloomy priſon."

"I dare not communicate my ſentiments," returned Madame Bruyere, "leſt I ſhould incur another rebuke; 'tis happy for us that our different taſtes are ſuitable to our reſpective ſituations: you are formed to enjoy the world and its pleaſures; whilſt retirement, in the boſom of my family, was ever my preferable choice,

before

before adverſity taught me the *neceſſity* of it——But forgive me, I am about to moralize again." "Well, ladies," ſaid the Marquis, "if you are not quite fixed in your candle-light entertainment, I am ready to attend you to a different view." "O," cried the Counteſs, "pray let us enjoy the variety—I doat on a change of ſcene." They aroſe, and returning along the covered path, followed their conductor through the trees till they began to aſcend a ſmall mount, from the top of which they beheld a moſt delightful and extenſive proſpect—the plains of Switzerland, the ſea, a variety of mountains, vallies and villages, were all crouded before them; and the Counteſs was obliged to confeſs ſhe had ſeldom ſeen any views that equalled, none that had ever ſurpaſſed, the multitude of beautiful objects that ſurrounded them.

They rambled for ſome time on the mountain, the Marquis entertained them with ſeveral fabulous tales circulated among the payſans of the neighbouring villages, whoſe

whoſe huts lay ſcattered round the ſides of the mountains. Near the hermitage was a cavern, ſuppoſed to extend to an immenſe diſtance, for its termination had never been explored, though many courageous people had ventured a ramble under ground with lights; but whether through fear, or, as they gave out, from ſome uncommon noiſes, which they deemed ſupernatural, no one had ever been hardy enough to proceed and diſcover its extent. In conſequence of which, a hundred ridiculous ſtories had been promulgated to juſtify their cowardice, and deter others from an attempt to remove the prejudices traditional from father to ſon.

As the Marquis in his relation appeared ſenſible of the ſuperſtitious folly that prevailed among the neighbouring peaſantry, the Counteſs aſked him if curioſity, and a deſire to remove the veil of prejudice, had never influenced *him* to fathom the extent of this dreadful cave? "No," he replied, ſmiling, "I am perfectly content with viewing the beauties of nature by the light of

of the ſun; creeping under ground in the dark, or by torch-light, merely to ſatisfy a curioſity that promiſes no gratification, and may poſſibly be attended with much fatigue, if not danger, is an affair not at all to my taſte: nor is it of conſequence to ſeek any diſcoveries tending to enlighten thoſe poor vulgar people, whoſe belief in the terrors of the cave are too firmly imbibed to be eaſily ſhaken.—Yet," added he "if you ladies are curious, if you wiſh to enter into the bowels of the earth, I ſhall certainly be knight-errant enough to attend you."

"Not for the world!" exclaimed the Counteſs. "I have no apprehenſions," ſaid Madame Bruyere, "of ſupernatural events, but there may be other dangers to encounter under the mountain, therefore I have no deſire to deſcend where I am not ſure of meeting with a ſafe footing." "I am not ſorry," returned the Marquis, "that you do not exact from my complaiſance what would not have quite accorded with my inclinations."

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They now returned to the grotto: the muſic was enchanting; and a change of refreſhments, with additional lights, excited freſh exclamations of wonder and delight. A thouſand gallant things were ſaid by the Marquis, the ladies ſeemed in a perfect harmony of ſpirits, their minds were in uniſon with the faſcinating ſoftneſs that reigned in this little fairy apartment: Madame Bruyere once indeed breathed a wiſh "that her dear children were preſent;" and the Marquis propoſed on their next excurſion to the grotto that the "dear angels" ſhould accompany them.

It was the cloſe of the evening when they returned to the caſtle, and both ladies thanked their gallant friend for the pleaſures they had ſo fully enjoyed, and his attention to heighten the beauty of the ſcene. He again repeated his wiſh for the power of creating new amuſements daily, to enliven the hours they condeſcended to paſs in his caſtle.

The following morning, while the Marquis was employed in procuring a diverſi-

ty of entertainments, the Counteſs entered the apartment of Madame Bruyere, who was earneſtly engaged in the inſtruction of her children. "What an amiable creature you are!" exclaimed ſhe, "ah, how I wiſh"——"What, my dear Madame, are your wiſhes?" aſked Madame. "Pardon me," returned ſhe, "but when I think on the thouſand good qualities of the Marquis, his benevolence, his generoſity, ſweetneſs of temper, and excellent underſtanding, who but muſt wiſh it had been the lot of ſuch a man to have been joined to his kindred ſoul, to have poſſeſſed the heart and hand of the woman I ſee before me."

"With as high an opinion as you can entertain of our friend's excellencies," replied ſhe coldly, and yet much ſurpriſed, "I ſhould think them poorly rewarded by ſuch an union as you hint at; had ſuch a thing been within the chapter of poſſibilities—happily *I am* united to *my* 'kindred ſoul;' my beloved Bruyere is the only man that ever did, or could touch

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my heart; we were born with unfaſhionable ſentiments, a fondneſs for domeſtic happineſs, and a wiſh to find the ſum of all our felicity in the boſom of our family.

"In happier days," continued ſhe, "when fortune ſmiled, and every proſpect round us was alluring; when courted by the world, and flattered with profeſſions of friendſhip and eſteem, we mixed with the one, and were grateful for the other: but our beſt and moſt rational enjoyments ſprung from the reciprocity of affection within our own boſoms—Thank heaven, not even our moſt bitter enemies can deprive us of that."

The Counteſs had liſtened very impatiently, and not very well pleaſed with the ſolemnity which accompanied the words of Madame Bruyere; but affecting to laugh—"My dear creature," cried ſhe, "you have the moſt antediluvian ideas that ever entered the head of a young woman! Would you have me ſuppoſe you are ſo abſtracted as not to regret the loſs of fortune, of conſequence in your coun-

try, and perfectly indifferent to wealth, rank, and its concomitant advantages."

"By no means do I wish to give any such implication to my words.—I certainly *do regret* the loss of fortune; I feel the humiliation of my lost consequence, and perhaps," said she, the big tear trembling in her eye, "never more than at this moment: I pretend not, Madame, to any extraordinary self denials, I feel the whole rigour of my fate, though I should very little deserve the kind attentions I experience here, if I indulged in useless regrets and unavailing sorrow, however deeply they wound my bosom—I may conceal, but I cannot conquer them."

"Well, well," exclaimed the Countess, "we must drop the subject; you are getting into the doleful, and that spoils your charming face; besides every word you utter confirms the propriety of my wishes, nor can you be offended, for remember *I* do not know your "*beloved Bruyere.*"

The return of the children, who had with-

withdrawn for a few moments, gave a check to the ſubject; and again the fond delighted mother felt her riſing diſpleaſure abate, and beheld the object of it with returned complacence, from the tenderneſs ſhe laviſhed on theſe dear children.

But when that lady retired, when left to herſelf, and reflecting ſeriouſly on this converſation with the Counteſs, with a number of little occaſional ſallies of the ſame tendency that dropped from her whenever they were alone together; ſhe began to feel a degree of uneaſineſs at her ſituation, and not a little diſguſt againſt the lady who evidently violated delicacy, and that reverence due to the unfortunate, in drawing her forlorn ſtate ſo abruptly to her view; as if it could ever for a moment ceaſe to occupy her mind! A thouſand painful ideas crouded upon her from a retroſpection of the paſt, and a ſad foreboding of what was yet to come. "Oh!" cried ſhe, "that I had not ſacrificed my feelings to the judgment of others; that I had but perſevered in my wiſh to accom-

pany my dear Bruyere, his tenderneſs would not have been proof againſt a determined reſolution; could any dangers or inconveniences weigh in the balance againſt the painful inquietude and ſuſpenſe I hourly endure from this ſeparation? Alas! his affectionate ſolicitude for my eaſe and accommodation, has only been productive of additional miſery!"

Madame Bruyere embraced her children with ſtreaming eyes, which produced from them ſuch a ſtring of innocent and affectionate queſtions on the cauſe of thoſe tears, that, unable to anſwer, ſhe roſe haſtily, and retired from them to the garden. She aſcended a terrace that overlooked the road, loſt in a painful reverie; ſhe thought not of the paſſing travellers, until rouſed by the noiſe of rattling wheels cloſe under her; turning her head ſhe ſaw two carriages, in one of which were a gentleman and lady, looking from the window earneſtly at her; as their eyes met they bowed, ſhe returned the compliment; and obſerving in the other chaiſe a gentleman

man and his valet, ſhe inſtantly concluded, theſe were the gueſts expected by the Marquis.

Nor was ſhe miſtaken, for in a ſhort time after, he approached her with quick ſteps and a lively air; "My friends are arrived, Madame," ſaid he, "they are impatient for the honour of being preſented to you." She ſtruggled to ſuppreſs the ſorrow that hung heavy on her heart, to aſſume a degree of compoſure ſhe did not feel, and prepare to receive ſtrangers whom ſhe would moſt willingly have avoided; ſhe gave him her hand, which he gently preſſed, while a ſort of repreſſed ſigh iſſued from his boſom.

They entered the ſaloon; Mademoiſelle Serac, her brother, the Chevalier, and Monſieur Le Grand, were ſeverally introduced. Mademoiſelle looked with a ſcrutinizing eye on the amiable Madame, but it was not an eye of pleaſure; ſhe touched each cheek ſlightly, and paid a cold compliment—not ſo did the Chevalier behave, he made ample amends for the in-

difference of his ſiſter; he poured forth a rhapſody of nothing-meaning phraſes, ſuch as he had been accuſtomed to laviſh on every handſome woman; he knew not that Madame Bruyere had a *ſoul*, a mind ſuperior to the flippant and idle adulations men were in the habits of uttering mechanically, whenever a pretty female met their view; and ſatisfied with his own eloquence, he retired to make room for Monſieur Le Grand.

This gentleman addreſſed her with infinite politeneſs, but with a cold forbidding manner that ſeemed to freeze the civility of his expreſſions before they reached the ear; and challenged only a very cold compliment in return. When all parties were ſeated, the lively Counteſs, eager for news and ſcandal, aſked a thouſand queſtions of what was doing, and ſaying, at Court, and at Paris, from whence they were juſt returned; and while the Chevalier and his ſiſter were gratifying themſelves in anſwering her, and in relating a number of anecdotes, ſome true, and others falſe, to the

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diſadvantage of thoſe *they* ſtiled, *friends* and *acquaintance*; it is highly proper our readers ſhould be acquainted with all the characters before them, and firſt we ſhall develope that of the *generous* and *friendly* Marquis St. Juliers.

His father was a younger brother of a noble, but not a very opulent family, and had been deſigned for the church; fortunately for him his good genius threw him in the way of a rich widow, neither old nor ugly, but vain, coquetiſh, and expenſive: ſhe was touched with the young and agreeable perſon of St. Juliers, and from compaſſionating his fate, in being likely to be deprived of all the pleaſures of ſocial life; ſhe was imperceptibly drawn on a few ſteps further, pity produced love: and ſhe reſolved to change his deſtiny—in ſhort, ſhe married him. They retired into the country to enjoy their mutual and *eternal* happineſs unmoleſted by the frivolities of the world; a Marquiſate was purchaſed, and added to the family name of the fond and grateful huſband, and du-

ring an *age of ſix months* they lived for themſelves alone.

But, alas! ſuch is the inſtability of promiſed pleaſures, that "eternal happineſs," which was to exiſt detached from the world, about that period, by an untoward accident met with a little ſhock, which in its conſequences deſtroyed the illuſion raiſed by the fond Marchioneſs, and reſtored the all-accompliſhed pair to that world they had ſacrificed for love.

This accident was the diſcovery of a little badinage, a trifling intrigue between the *grateful* Marquis and the fille de chambre of his lady. It was an unlucky event, and the fact admitted of no evaſion or excuſe; the poor imprudent culprit was turned out of the houſe, reproached, diſgraced, and ruined.

All traces of domeſtic happineſs were torn up by the roots; a poor, contemptible, ungrateful wretch, raiſed and ſupported by her bounty and unpardonable weakneſs; had *he* dared to neglect a woman of of her beauty and ſpirit, for a mean vul-

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gar creature, poor and ugly? She would be revenged, ſhe would return to Paris, and blaze once more in thoſe ſcenes of delight and faſhion ſhe had ſo abſurdly given up for a falſe ingrate, whom ſhe now heartily deſpiſed.

Such were the determinations of the injured and enraged Marchioneſs, and unfortunately for the guilty pair, ſhe had the power of realizing them; for however violently in love with the young Juliers, it had not ſuperſeded prudence; ſhe had, unknown to him, ſecured the chief part of her fortune in her own diſpoſal; while he, eager to profit by her partiality, and marry a woman that could lift him into conſequence with ſociety, dared not mention a ſyllable about money, leſt he ſhould be ſuſpected of intereſted motives.

The Marquiſate that was purchaſed gave him but a ſmall independence; the eſtate was not large, though a title was annexed to it. It is moſt certain that ſome time before this unlucky fille de chambre came in the way as a ſtumbling-

block to matrimonial felicity, he was grown quite tired of paſtoral happineſs, and had been caſting about how to return to Paris, without giving an alarm to the tender feelings of his lady, then far advanced in her pregnancy. A new attraction, in the form of a very pretty young girl, recently taken by the Marchioneſs, ſuddenly changed the current of his ideas, and he thought it "moſt conducive to the health of his *adorable* wife to remain in the country till her accouchement was over, a very eminent practitioner living in the vicinity of their eſtate."

The lady, whoſe paſſion had not yet ſuffered quite ſo much abatement as her young huſband's, who was not quite tired of the country, and who could promiſe herſelf no very great delights in the gay world in her preſent ſituation, ſeemed enchanted with the reciprocity of love and content that marked the behaviour of the grateful Marquis.

Both parties thus happy, what on earth could be more diſtreſſing than ſuch a diſcovery

covery as was thrown in her way, by the evil genius of the Marquis! The injured lady was outrageous, the houſe was in tumults, and in two days they were on the road to Paris, with ſentiments far different from thoſe that occupied their minds when leaving it ſix months before.

Sullen and reproachful were the looks of the Marchioneſs; mortified, dejected, and thoughtful the brow of her huſband. When arrived at their hotel, ſhe ſent for him to her apartment, there, after a torrent of reproaches, ſhe acquainted him with the reſerves ſhe had made of her fortune, and her reſolution to enjoy it when delivered from her preſent ſituation; pride and vexation had extinguiſhed love, and henceforth ſhe ſhould live to herſelf, the world, and thoſe friends ſhe had neglected for a mean deceitful man.

Stung to the ſoul by her reproaches, perhaps more wounded by this diſcovery of *her prudence*, than regretting the *im*-prudence of his own conduct, he no longer thought it neceſſary to wear a maſk, but

but boldly and inſolently defended and aſſerted his own rights, and upbraided her with meanneſs, duplicity, and ſuch motives for marrying him, as were highly diſgraceful to any woman.

In ſhort, matters proceeded to ſuch lengths that he ruſhed out of the houſe, openly avowing his intention to return into the country, and recal her rival to his houſe and heart. Thus ſcarcely had the friends of both heard of their arrival, before that good-natured goſſip Fame, reported their ſeparation with every aggravation that attends on a thrice-told tale of ſcandal,

The Marquis kept his word, for the ſhort period that his lady lived, who being in due time brought to bed of a fine boy, was ſo eager to emerge from her confinement, and participate in thoſe pleaſures ſhe had ſo long neglected, that on her firſt going into public ſhe caught a violent cold, which ſoon terminated in death, by a defluxion on her lungs. Appriſed of her danger, ſhe refuſed to ſee her huſband,

huſband, whoſe ſelfiſh ingratitude ſhe never could pardon; and having left her infant ſon to the guardianſhip of a brother, who then was reſident in Liſbon, and a near relation living in Paris, ſhe gave her fortune entirely in truſt to them for her child, and never once mentioned the name of its father.

No ſooner did the news of her death reach the ears of the Marquis, than he haſtened to Paris, but, to his infinite chagrin, found that his title and a ſmall eſtate ſcarcely adequate to ſupport it decently, were all the advantages that accrued to him. He took an unaccountable and unnatural averſion to the young heir, whom he ſcarcely acknowledged as his ſon, and gave him up, without reſerve, to the appointed truſtees; he returned to the country, diſpoſed of his eſtate, diſmiſſed his unlucky miſtreſs, and entered into the army, where he loſt his life in a battle about four years after.

The infant Marquis St. Juliers, inheriting nothing from his father but a title; diſ-

diſregarded by all his family, whom his mother had diſobliged by neglect; and leaving her child ſolely to the care of her own relations, was taken into the houſe of Monſieur Bouthon, one of his guardians, reſident in Paris. The uncle in Liſbon was an old bachelor; he very readily gave up the truſt to Bouthon, who being a family man, and a man of reputation, was, he thought, the moſt proper to manage the charge committed to their care.

Monſieur Bouthon was in moderate circumſtances, with all the diſpoſition in the world to better them, and make a ſuperior figure in the world; he had borne the reputation of an upright character, becauſe he had never encountered any temptation to be otherwiſe.—How many characters in life are ſupported upon no better foundation in both ſexes! He had a wife and two daughters growing into womanhood, who would be but ſlenderly provided for, unleſs one of them ſhould embrace a monaſtic life; he was naturally gay, and of an

an expenſive turn, but neceſſity had narrowed his inclinations, and prudence ſeemed to be the effect of choice.

Such was the man entruſted with the fortune and perſon of the young Marquis, and who quickly made it appear, he derived no ſmall advantages from the power delegated to him—Not to be prolix, at a proper age the youth was ſent to an academy, where he found a friend and companion in the young Bruyere, about two years older than himſelf.

The latter was candid, liberal, and unſuſpicious; the generoſity of his own heart led him to believe others were equally as worthy as himſelf; he was pleaſed with the exterior of the young Marquis, and indeed Nature had not been a niggard in *her* gifts. The haughty inſolence of Bouthon had bowed his ſpirit to a ſubmiſſive, ſlaviſh complaiſance, that ſeemed to Bruyere the effects of much politeneſs and great good nature. Very little money was allowed for his pocket, and he was given to underſtand the income of his *ſmall fortune*

tune would ſcarcely admit of even that trifle; and that his generous guardian would be obliged to diſburſe from his own pocket the expences of his education, which he truſted his little friend would repay when he came of age.

Bruyere took an uncommon liking to this young orphan; he quickly diſcovered his pecuniary wants, ſaw that he was unable to keep pace with him in their juvenile amuſements and expences, and from that hour, his purſe was as open as his heart; not conferring *obligations*, but embracing St. Juliers as a brother, he entreated that their intereſts, their expences, and their purſuits, might in future be cloſely united. He ſupplied him ſo liberally, and with ſo much delicate friendlineſs, that even St. Juliers ſometimes felt abaſhed, and ſhrunk at his own littleneſs.

Far different from his noble friend's was the character of the Marquis, with all the ſelfiſh cunning of his father, he had acquired, from the treatment of Bouthon, habits of duplicity, mean ſervility, and the

the command of a temper naturally impetuous and daring. His paſſions were warm, his diſpoſition irritable, but obliged to ſuppreſs the former, and curb the latter; at a very early age he had learnt to throw a veil over his natural defects, and accommodate himſelf to the will of others, from whom he might hope to derive any advantages.

A diſpoſition and ſentiments ſo little underſtood by Bruyere, laid him open to the cunning and ſelfiſh deſigns of his new friend, who had the art to acquire his affection by profeſſing what he did not feel, and aſſimilating his ſentiments, though not his actions, to the upright heart of Bruyere.

Three years they paſſed together, and many very blamable follies, many improprieties and expences, which could not always be concealed from his friend, the Marquis had the art to gloſs over, and even to make a merit of taking reproach to himſelf, which, *he ſaid*, belonged to others, of his companions whoſe weakneſs he

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pitied, and had been drawn in to exculpate at his own expence. Though Bruyere ſometimes thought this was going too far, to bear the odium of other people's follies, yet it originated from ſuch a ſweetneſs of temper, ſuch generoſity of heart, that he honoured and adored the cauſe, though the effect was a little too romantic.

In this manner was the guileleſs heart of young Bruyere in the hands of an artful, unprincipled ſtripling, turned and directed as beſt ſuited his purpoſe; and the purſe of his friend ſo entirely at his command, that the other retrenched his own expences that his dear St. Juliers might be the more liberally ſupplied. At the expiration of the third year his friendſhip was put to the teſt.

Monſieur Bouthon received a letter from the uncle of St. Juliers, reſiding at Liſbon, requeſting that his young nephew might be ſent over to him, as he had buried a wife whom he had married ſix years before; and being determined not to enter into that ſtate again, he ſhould conſider his

his nephew as his heir, and henceforth take upon himſelf the care of his fortune. He required therefore an exact account of his affairs, his fortune and expenditure, as he ſhould exonerate Mr. Bouthon from any further trouble.

Nothing could be more unexpected than this letter; after having for ſo many years declined interfering or concerning himſelf for the fortune or perſon of his nephew, Bouthon had looked upon himſelf as the only guardian, and never dreamt the uncle would call him to account for the management of his truſt. The young man was an entire ſtranger to the real amount of his fortune, Bouthon had made free with all the intereſt and rents; and as to the perſonals, which he had turned into ready money, he had ſecured that for his own uſe, by laying it out in a purchaſe in a diſtant province.

This demand from Liſbon was a ſtroke of thunder, and the only way to avoid being cruſhed by it, was to leave Paris and the young Marquis to his fate. He

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loſt no time; he gathered in all the monies and rents due, nay, even borrowed money on the eſtate; and then with his family privately left Paris, nor could his name or reſidence ever be traced beyond his embarkation for Holland; for he had been gone a full fortnight before the news reached St. Juliers, and then through the channel of a letter received by one of his companions.

He was ſtruck dumb by the intelligence, then flying to his friend, he related with breathleſs agitation, "that his guardian, his father, had deſerted and left him, perhaps to want and miſery, for he knew not whether he had any property or not."

Bruyere, though exceedingly ſhocked, embraced the deſpairing youth with the ſincereſt affection; "Are we not brothers?" ſaid he, "Yes, *now* more than ever cloſely united, my fortune, my intereſt is your's."

Reſtored to a little calmneſs by this kindneſs, St. Juliers began to conſider what ſteps it became him to take towards inveſtigating his circumſtances; he was

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ſoliciting the advice of his friend, when a letter was delivered to him, the poſt mark, Dieppe; the writing he knew to be Bouthon's, he tore it open, the date was ten days preceding—He bid him "Adieu, for ever, that his affairs called him into a diſtant country, from whence he ſhould return no more—his eſtates (naming the ſituation and value of ſuch as he had no power to diſpoſe of) were not indebted to him at preſent, but, that his uncle at Liſbon would receive him, if he could raiſe money to carry him into Portugal."

Such were the brief contents, and from which St. Juliers derived more of joy than vexation, to hear that an uncle, who had never noticed him, and of whoſe exiſtence Monſieur Bouthon had pretended to be ignorant, "would receive him"—gave him unexpected tranſport; he had been kept in ſuch profound ignorance reſpecting his own affairs, that he felt the embezzlement of his property, and the ſtate of his finances, in a leſs painful degree, than if he had known the value of them, and the

immenſe ſums he had been deprived of. What now remained, was more than he had ever been taught to expect; therefore in the preſent moment all his inquietude aroſe from the difficulty of getting money to convey him into Portugal, for not being of age, he could do nothing with his eſtates, which were farmed out, and no rents due.

When the generous Bruyere underſtood his ſituation, he heſitated not a moment to offer him not only every Louis he poſſeſſed, but employed *his credit* to make up the neceſſary ſums for the benefit of his dear St. Juliers.

O, how warm were the embraces, how fervent the expreſſions of gratitude, which the obliged Marquis heaped upon his friend! "Eternal friendſhip, everlaſting gratitude, and a thouſand proteſtations of a ſenſible feeling heart, that hoped ere long to return all pecuniary favours, though the obligation muſt ever remain *un*returnable, and *never* to be forgotten."

In ſhort, the dear friends parted with

inexpreſſible grief and reluctance, only flattering themſelves, that as in two years St. Juliers would be at age, he muſt conſequently return to France, and then they ſhould have the felicity to be reunited.

Bruyere left the academy ſoon after he had loſt his good friend: ſome months elapſed before he received a letter to eaſe the anxiety that preyed upon his mind—this letter ſo deſired, and ſo welcome, was replete with the warmeſt expreſſions of eſteem and friendſhip; gave an animated deſcription of his agreeable ſituation and brilliant proſpects, but contained not a ſyllable relative to his pecuniary obligations, though he knew that his friend muſt make good the payments he had engaged for, to ſupply him.

This, however, did not affect the mind of Bruyere, he had come into the poſſeſſion of his fortune, and had too much generoſity to regret the advancing ſums, that did not *greatly* inconvenience him; on the contrary, he felt a conſcious delight, that his timely ſervices had been the means of

procuring ſuch eſſential advantages to his friend.

Several letters paſſed between them, though the Marquis was not *quite* a punctual correſpondent. When Bruyere married, he took care to communicate his happineſs, and after ſome time received a few lines in anſwer, which informed him, that "the Marquis being at age, was preparing to return and take poſſeſſion of his eſtates in France, and ſhould have the inexpreſſible pleaſure of embracing his friend in a few weeks."

Weeks and months rolled away, but no Marquis appeared; at length, wearied out by a variety of conjectures, he proceeded to ſome enquiries, and then learnt, that a gentleman had been commiſſioned to act as an agent for him, the ill ſtate of his uncle's health preventing the Marquis from leaving Liſbon.

Bruyere was ſurpriſed that he had not written to him of this change of meaſures, but ſtill expected to hear; no letters, however, arrived, and a ſilence ſo unaccountable

able excited ſome little reſentment, he delayed writing himſelf from month to month, till at length the endearments of a beloved wife, and an encreaſe to his family, engroſſed the chief of his attentions. He ſtill felt the remains of that perfect friendſhip he had borne for St. Juliers, and was hurt at his neglect, yet he conceived it poſſible another country, new connections, and probably an expectation of coming to France, might impede the Marquis from writing: incapable of baſeneſs himſelf, he could not for a moment admit a thought prejudicial to the honour of a friend.

A very few weeks before the fatal termination of that law-ſuit in which he fell a victim to the powerful cabal of his enemies, he had heard the Marquis St. Juliers was returned to France, and was at his caſtle near Salines: the ſtroke that robbed him and his family of fortune, country and friends, firſt made him turn his thoughts towards a man he had ſo eſſentially obliged.

If, ſaid he mentally, he is ſtill the St.

Juliers I loved, he will pour "Oil and wine into my wounds," he will with tranſport aſſiſt my unfortunate family; there is no degradation in receiving favours from a beloved and grateful friend. If, on the contrary, proſperity, time, and the ſelfiſh maxims of the world, *ſhould* have corrupted a good diſpoſition, I can eaſily diſcover the change, and withdraw in time from a forced kindneſs, and a narrowed heart.

We have ſeen that the trial was made; and that the exceſſive friendly reception he met with from the Marquis, entirely obliterated all remembrance of former neglects, and reinſtated him in a warm corner of that upright boſom, ever a ſtranger to art and duplicity.

But, alas! he was the dupe of a vile, ſelfiſh, and artificial heart, that ſought only its own gratifications, and though ſurpriſed, confuſed and abaſhed, at the preſence of a man he had ſhamefully and ungratefully treated; he had art enough to cover his chagrin, and received him with open arms, becauſe he had not a plan at hand in that

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ſudden exigence, to free himſelf from the ſight of one he deteſted, from one to whom he was conſcious he was indebted for favours he felt no inclination to acknowledge or repay.

There is no doubt, but he would have taken ſome method to have driven this friend from his houſe, had not the unfortunate circumſtances attached to him, precluded Bruyere from all hope or expectation of remaining with him; no ſooner, therefore, did he learn the extent of his miſery, than he redoubled the ardors of his friendſhip, convinced that he muſt ſoon get rid of his unwelcome viſitor.

A very few hours gave a new turn to his ſentiments; the ſight of Madame Bruyere, whoſe beauty acquired additional power from the ſoft melancholy that pervaded the fineſt features, and clouded without leſſening the expreſſion that darted from her brilliant eyes; the elegance of her manners, and the grateful effuſions that were addreſſed to him from a mind of exquiſite ſenſibility. All thoſe charms united, were

too powerful not to catch the ſuſceptible heart of the Marquis, and as his paſſions knew no boundaries but his will, from that moment he formed a plan which effectually deceived the unſuſpecting Monſieur Bruyere, and threw his amiable and unhappy family entirely into his power.

Thus have we developed the character of the Marquis, and next we muſt ſpeak of his coadjutor the Counteſs, whom he had introduced as his relation to his grateful and innocent gueſt.

This Counteſs was, we are ſorry to ſay, of noble birth, a native of France, of a gay libertine diſpoſition, and ſo addicted to play, that ſhe had diſſipated a tolerable fortune, inherited from her parents, and involved herſelf in ſuch pecuniary diſtreſſes, that to preſerve her conſequence and reputation, ſhe had ſacrificed her honour: 'tis a ſtrange contradiction, but a certain fact, that ſhe was more eaſily pardoned for ſuſpected virtue, than ſhe would have been for not diſcharging her play debts; the licentious principles adopted among the higher

higher circles, overlooked the one as a venial fault, whilſt the failure of punctuality in payments would have ſtamped her with infamy, and ſhut the doors of all faſhionable people againſt her.

When the barriers of virtue are broken down, 'tis rarely that one falſe ſtep is attended with remorſe, and that the paſſions are ſubjected to the dictates of returning prudence; at leaſt, the Counteſs made no ſuch efforts, ſhe plunged boldly into vice, and recruited her purſe at the expence of every virtue.

Accident had thrown her into an acquaintance with the Marquis very ſoon after his arrival from Liſbon, at Beſançon, where ſhe had a ſmall eſtate, which ſhe was endeavouring to redeem from a farmer general to whom it had been mortgaged; he inſiſted upon terms beyond her ability to comply with, and ſhe had juſt given up the buſineſs as hopeleſs, when the Marquis called to receive ſome rents due to him.

He was ſtruck with her perſon, which

was really handſome, though on a large ſcale, and being ſoon informed of her character, he ſo intereſted himſelf with the farmer generale, that the negociation was reſumed, and the affair ſettled to her entire ſatisfaction. She accompanied him to his caſtle, and paſſed a few weeks there as his relation, after which ſhe returned to Beſançon, to mix with ſociety and renew her favourite amuſements.

The Marquis was not yet tired of the conſequence he enjoyed among his tenantry, he had much to ſettle, and choſe to call in all his rents, that he might place his money to an advantage previous to his intended tour to Paris. In this employment he was unexpectedly broken in upon by his quondam friend Bruyere.

No ſooner had his heart been captivated by the charms and graces of Madame, than he determined to get rid of the intruding huſband, and retain the lady. Duped by profeſſions apparently calculated for his happineſs, the unfortunate Bruyere quitted his family, left his darling wife in the power of an

an unprincipled villain, and fell a victim to the horrid ſchemes planned to deſtroy him.

The encreaſing melancholy of Madame Bruyere, the ſtrict propriety and unaffected delicacy in her every word and action, convinced the Marquis, that to conquer a heart like hers, to overturn principles ſo well eſtabliſhed, would be no eaſy taſk; at the ſame time the difficulty inflamed his paſſions, and made him reſolute in his attempts to triumph over a virtue that ſeemed ſo impregnable.

At length, he concluded to call in an auxiliary of her own ſex, who might gradually ſap the foundation raiſed by love and honour to impede his wiſhes—No man knew the value of, or adored the gifts of Plutus more than himſelf, and powerful muſt be that attraction which could induce him to offer ſuch terms to the Counteſs Dulay, if ſhe would aſſiſt his wiſhes and ſubdue this haughty wife, as brought her from the gay ſociety ſhe loved, to devote her time to the accompliſhment of his deſires.

We can ſcarcely *wiſh* it ſhould be credited, that a woman of rank, ſome fortune, and once of unblemiſhed reputation, ſhould by a gradation in vice, by the love of play, and purſuing a ſyſtem of odious gallantry, become ſo abandoned as to hate virtue, and join with a baſe inhoſpitable villain, in his wicked plans to ruin an unfortunate and defenceleſs woman! But alas! too many inſtances of ſuch atrocity have aſtoniſhed the *un*faſhionable world, and ſuch deſpicable beings *do exiſt*, as from the conſcious depravity of their own hearts, ſeek to reduce others to a level with themſelves.

To affect this baſe ſcheme, ſhe haſtened to the caſtle under her former aſſumed affinity to the Marquis: ſhe was by care and artifice to diſcover the vulnerable part in the character of Madame Bruyere, and concluding that all frail mortals *had* their weak ſide, which when once developed, laid them open and free to be worked upon; they doubted not but by ſagacity and duplicity they ſhould ſoon reduce the ſevere virtue

tue of a haughty woman, and enjoy the fruits of their treacherous machinations.

But this intended victim was ſo devoted to her huſband, ſo attached to her children, that ſhe appeared dead to vanity, deaf to adulation, and her complaiſance rather a mechanical effect of what ſhe thought due to the maſter of the houſe, than the reſult of eſteem, or any intereſt he could claim in her regards.

All the various hints, and well-timed praiſes beſtowed on the Marquis by his aſſociate, were received with a calmneſs, that denoted no particular feeling in the encomiums; though gratitude induced her to join in them, when conſiſtent with truth: but at length thoſe artful people overreached themſelves, and ſhe began to ſhrink from attentions, and to be hurt by converſations that frequently occurred, though without daring to whiſper to herſelf, that any impropriety was *intended*.

A new plan was now adopted by the wicked pair, the reſult of which was, to bring the Chevalier Serac and his ſiſter,

with Monſieur Le Grand, on a viſit—the Chevalier, a profeſſed libertine, a petit maitre in perſon, but of the moſt corrupt morals, purſuing every pretty woman, and aſperſing the characters of thoſe he could not ſucceed with: his ſiſter, a finiſhed coquet, yet not quite inexorable where *ſhe liked*; an avowed enemy to merit and beauty, vain, inſolent, and envious.

Monſieur Le Grand, affecting great ſeverity of morals to cover a very baſe heart; inſiduous under an appearance of gravity, ſententious in words, where he had a point to carry, licentious in actions, a needy ſpendthrift, who was at the command of every man that could accommodate his wants and gratify his predominant paſſions.

Such were the company introduced to Madame Bruyere: the familiar and hyperbolical compliments of the Chevalier, diſguſted her; the forward levity, yet towards her, diſdainful and ſcrutinizing glances, of Mademoiſelle his ſiſter, ſhocked her delicacy,

cacy, and raiſed both contempt and diſpleaſure.

On a comparative view, how much more amiable was the Marquis to the Chevalier; how greatly did the objectionable behaviour of the Counteſs ſink before the more improper manners of Mademoiſelle? In proportion as ſhe felt encreaſing diſlike for the new gueſts, her complaiſance was redoubled towards her firſt acquaintance, yet ſhe could not eſteem the Counteſs, and often felt a repugnance ſhe thought unjuſtifiable when ſhe received particular civilities from the Marquis. Monſieur Le Grand ſeemed to merit her approbation, the coldneſs ſo viſible in his firſt addreſs, wore off by degrees, yet he ſtill preſerved a gravity in his deportment and converſation, that engaged her attentions.

Several days paſſed on in a variety of entertainments and different manœuvres; ſometimes the Marquis ventured on half-formed ſentences, half-ſuppreſſed ſighs, that when ſhe looked with ſurpriſe or diſpleaſure, he haſtily withdrew his eyes, changed the ſubject, and ſeemed anxious to eraze from her obſerva-

obſervation and memory, what had *inadvertently* eſcaped him; then Mademoiſelle would rally him on his change in diſpoſition, flirt with him, try to engage his attention, and accuſe him of his deficiencies in gallantry to a pretty young woman.

On ſuch occaſions the Counteſs would ſigh, ſhake her head—"Ah! my poor couſin, how erroneouſly do you judge of the beſt heart in the world! He is, indeed, no longer the ſprightly captivating Marquis St. Juliers, that on his arrival at Benſançon charmed every eye, and engaged every heart; I proteſt he has even metamorphoſed me into a grave ſentimental creature; beware of the infection, my young friend, but do not accuſe one of the moſt feeling hearts in the world of inſenſibility."

If Madame Bruyere took herſelf from ſuch converſations, ſhe was followed by the Chevalier, who was liberal to exceſs in his devoirs, and often drew from her very ſevere and contemptuous retorts. In ſhort, ſhe had no reſource from chagrin and diſguſt, but when with her children, or in

ſhort

ſhort conferences with Monſieur Le Grand, who kept up the dignity of his firſt appearance, though polite and attentive to her.

One morning, taking her accuſtomed early walk in the garden with her children, at an hour when the family ſeldom left their apartments, ſhe ſeated herſelf in a ſmall arbour erected in the midſt of a thick ſhrubbery at the back and ſides, the narrow front opening to one ſide of the lawn, that led to the back front of the houſe.

The ſportive children diverted themſelves on this lawn, while their unhappy mother ſat muſing on the peculiar diſtreſs of her ſituation, and raiſing terrible images on her future proſpects. It was ſo long ſince ſhe had heard from her beloved Bruyere, ſo many evils might have befallen him to render all their hopes abortive; the very many unpleaſant occurrences that daily preſented themſelves to her view in her dependent ſtate, and in ſuch ſociety, that overcome by a variety of emotions too painful to ſuppreſs, ſhe burſt into tears, and with

with an imploring eye looked up to Heaven for protection.

At that moment abſorbed in grief and painful reflections, ſhe was ſtartled by hearing two voices, ſeemingly in earneſt converſation; they came nearer to her at the back of the ſhrubbery, and ſhe plainly underſtood the following converſation, though now and then a few words died away as the perſons walked among the trees; but ſhe was at no loſs to conceive who were the ſpeakers.

" Do not be diſpleaſed, my dear Coz. that I have followed you this morning; why do you reproach a curioſity that proceeds from friendſhip only; you are unhappy, I ſee it every hour, in ſpite of your ſtrenuous exertions to appear chearful, and impoſe upon your friends: I conjure you, my dear Marquis, to admit me to your confidence; judge not, becauſe I trifle, and wiſh to enliven the party, poſſibly at my own expence, think not, that I am devoid of ſenſibility, believe me, an unfeeling

feeling heart is not among the faults for which I may reproach myſelf."

"What is it that you require, my dear Counteſs? Why will you force from me a ſecret that oppreſſes my heart, becauſe I dare not avow it even to myſelf.—Alas! what miſerable hours do I paſs ſtruggling againſt a paſſion that conſumes me, a paſſion never to be gratified, for the dear object of my wiſhes is ſacred even from hope. What then remains for me, but deſpair and death!"

"You have ſaid enough, I underſtand the nature of your complaints, and feel that I have only a uſeleſs pity to beſtow.—Heavens! that two minds ſo adorned with every virtue, with every excellence, ſhould be thus ſeparated from giving and enjoying the pureſt bleſſings! Your paſſion is, indeed, hopeleſs, for, independent of her affection for Monſieur Bruyere her huſband, they are ſo entirely obliged to you, not only for what you *have* done, but for what you *propoſe* doing for the children, that every wiſh or ſigh of yours would be conſidered

as

as preſuming on your favours. Indeed, my dear couſin, I grieve ſincerely at your ill-placed affection, why not endeavour to turn your thoughts on Mademoiſelle Serac, who abſolutely adores you."

" I hope not, for never can I return her affection; no, one gentle word, one ſweet ſmile, from the dear, the accompliſhed Madame Bruyere, is more precious to me than all the alluring tenderneſs of her whole ſex beſide. To view her, to pleaſe her, is all the recompenſe I aſk, and if I fall a martyr to my paſſion, I will at leaſt have the ſupreme felicity of making her happy. For this purpoſe, I expect my notary to day——I beſeech you, my dear Counteſs, to let the ſecret you have drawn from me remain with you unrevealed to any one; for the world, I would not have it reach the ears of Madame; nor the leaſt ſuſpected by the Chevalier, he would jeer me to death for my delicacy and ſentiment. 'Tis only, when I can unobſerved ſteal here, and brood over the ſadneſs that devours me; 'tis then only, that I enjoy myſelf; and

and feel conſolation in contemplating the perfections of that object whom I reverence and adore."

"Be aſſured, your ſecret ſhall not tranſpire, for though I ſubſcribe very readily to the many claims your favourite has to eſteem, yet I am a little jealous of a flame like yours, that can ſubſiſt without hope, and in defiance of other allurements; therefore, a little female vanity joined with diſcretion, will moſt certainly command my ſilence. I can only wiſh that you may recover your reaſon, and by another attachment obtain future tranquillity; ſince only *one event*, not likely to happen, can ever join two perſons ſo gifted by nature, to make each other happy."

Thoſe were the laſt words that reached Madame Bruyere, the voices gradually dying away—ſhe ſat ſtill, in breathleſs terror, leſt they ſhould diſcover her, and unable to move, leſt ſhe ſhould meet their view. Never was aſtoniſhment and grief more forcibly impreſſed upon a feeling heart, than on that of this amiable woman: unlike

like the generality of her ſex, delighted with the love, whoever might be the lover, *ſhe* felt confuſed, oppreſſed, and humbled, for having given birth to an improper inclination.

When, from ſeveral little incidents, her ſuſpicions *had glanced* this way, ſhe reproved and bluſhed at them as imaginary and unworthy, as proceeding from her little acquaintance with ſuch gay perſons, who diverted themſelves with conjectures at the expence of their friends, and whoſe wit too often outſtept their prudence.

Now, ſhe could no longer miſconceive the meaning of all the attentions ſhe received, the ſuppreſſed ſighs ſhe had heard, and the tender melancholy that languiſhed in the eyes of the Marquis.—*Now*, ſhe muſt bear the curious inquiſitive looks of the Counteſs, and the conſcious pain at her own heart of knowing a ſecret improper for communication.

What could ſhe do? every moment ſhe ſhould bluſh before the Marquis, and fear the ſcrutinizing Counteſs; ſhe ought not

to

to reſide under the roof with a man who had avowed an attachment for her, yet where could ſhe go, what aſylum opened to receive a proſcribed family; or what plea could ſhe adduce for withdrawing herſelf from the friend and benefactor of her huſband and family?

While torn by theſe perplexing ideas ſhe ſat rooted to her ſeat, her darling children came running towards her playful and happy; ſhe ſtarted at ſeeing them, and riſing led them in ſilence towards the houſe, not a little apprehenſive of being met by the Marquis, whoſe preſence at that moment would have been inſupportable.

The ladies ſometimes having the privilege of breakfaſting in their own apartments, ſhe gladly availed herſelf of it this morning, though not cuſtomary with her to do ſo, from a wiſh to avoid giving unneceſſary trouble; ſcarcely had ſhe drank her coffee before the Counteſs entered with an alarmed air.

"My dear Madame, from whence proceeds

ceeds this unuſual deſertion of your friends, you are not ill I hope?" "Certainly not *ill*," replied ſhe, "yet neither am I well; I felt myſelf in one of thoſe odd humours which we have no right to obtrude upon our friends, and therefore choſe to partake of my children's breakfaſt."

"You are ſo perfectly amiable in all you ſay, or do," returned the Counteſs, "that it is impoſſible you ſhould appear in any diſpoſition but to give pleaſure; however, as my fears for your health are done away, for I never ſaw you look better in my life, what ſay you to a long ramble this delightful morning? It would be ungrateful not to enjoy the bleſſing of this glorious ſun."

"I ſhall be happy to attend you," ſaid Madame Bruyere in a low tone, for ſhe really ſhrunk from the piercing eyes of the Counteſs, and would gladly have been alone, but ſhe could not excuſe herſelf from the dinner table, and therefore it was uſeleſs to decline the walking party.

At

At the appointed hour they all met, and poor Madame Bruyere found that ſhe had only encreaſed her own difficulties by abſenting herſelf in the morning; every one expreſſed ſo much concern, and made her ſo much an object of obſervation, that ſhe rather pettiſhly exclaimed, "Bleſs me! why am *I* not at liberty ſometimes to follow my inclinations and breakfaſt alone? I never heard any other ladies called to an account thus."

"Called to an account!" repeated the Marquis, "Heavens, Madame! who is there that can preſume to do ſo? you have only to blame your own condeſcenſion and goodneſs, waving your privileges, and uncorrupted by example, you have always given us the bleſſing of your company, and we know too well how to appreciate its value, not to feel concern and diſappointment when deprived of it."

"Very gallant indeed!" cried Mademoiſelle, "but learn my friend how to compliment without paying it at the expence of others; for your 'uncorrupted by

by example,' I am determined to puniſh you, and, taking hold of his arm, I condemn you to be my protector and guide this morning." Saying this, ſhe placed her arm under his, and drew him briſkly from the party; a general laugh followed, and Monſieur le Grand offering his arm to Madame, ſhe very gladly accepted it.

"I wiſh that young woman was leſs trifling," ſaid he, "I believe her heart is good, but really one cannot take the trouble to ſearch for it among the rubbiſh of nothings that her levity produces; therefore I take but little notice of her."

"Indeed," anſwered Madame, "ſhe is playful and lively, perhaps ſometimes too much ſo; but why ſhould ſhe not? young, handſome, unacquainted with ſorrow, or the diſappointments of life; ſurely even an *exceſs* of ſpirits is but a venial fault, if any, in *her*—moſt cordially I wiſh they may never be depreſſed by untoward circumſtances, and at a certain age they will naturally ſubſide into ſober cheerfulneſs I have no doubt."

"You

"You are very liberal and good," ſaid he, "I did not expect to have met with one rational companion here but the Marquis; fortunately I was miſtaken, or I know not what would have become of me; for the Marquis is but a ſhadow of himſelf—I had the pleaſure of his acquaintance, though not ſo intimately as Monſieur Bruyere, at the academy where we all three ſtudied together; he was then bleſſed with the moſt ſpirited talents. On his arrival ſome time ago from Liſbon, accident threw us together, he was the ſame generous lively noble ſpirited fellow I had formerly known. We renewed our intimacy, and he told me when he had ſettled ſome affairs here that called for his more immediate attention, he purpoſed going to Paris to ſearch for, and agreeably ſurprize his beloved Bruyere."

"Ah!" interrupted Madame, "how changed the ſituation of that loved friend, how cruel his deſtiny, how unjuſt his perſecutions!"

"They will not laſt for ever, I truſt," reſumed

reſumed Monſieur le Grand, "but there is little ſtability in the happineſs we can promiſe to ourſelves in this world; why elſe do we ſee our good Marquis, ſurrounded with every bleſſing of fortune, independence, youth, good-ſenſe, a feeling heart, and every accompliſhment of body and mind; a prey to ſome ſecret inquietude, which renders every bleſſing fruitleſs to give peace or comfort.

"You muſt obſerve that in the midſt of his friends a penſive air ſteals over his features, his appetite fails, his cheerfulneſs is forced, and as he perſiſts in ſilence, and evades the moſt friendly enquiries into the cauſe of his ill concealed grief; I fear the moſt fatal effects; for where ſorrow is pent up, it preys upon the very vitals, and undermines the conſtitution by ſure, though ſlow degrees.

"Would to heaven I had the power of making the noble fellow happy, or knew how to procure a remedy that might ſave him in time."

Not one word was loſt upon the ſuſceptible

tible heart of Madame Bruyere, not one ſyllable could ſhe anſwer to this affecting picture—ſenſible that her ſilence muſt have an odd appearance, ſhe ſtrove to ſpeak, but the words died on her tongue; trembling, confuſed, ſhe hung on his arm, almoſt incapable of ſupporting herſelf.

"I read your generous concern," went he on, "you feel for this moſt worthy of men, you muſt doubtleſs alſo think how nearly intereſted *you* are in his fate; but on this head, I hope I may be forgiven if I ſuffer a ſecret to eſcape me, that may contribute to your repoſe; know that our amiable friend has drawn up his will, I have ſeen it, the notary comes this day to ſee it properly executed; *you*, Madame, are nobly provided for, and your children will inherit two thirds of his fortune."

"And is it poſſible," exclaimed ſhe, in a voice of agony, "that you can ſuppoſe this intelligence can *leſſen* my concern? O, my God!" continued ſhe, tears falling down her pale cheeks, "how unfortunate am I, what will become of me!" "You

ſurprize me," returned he, "why this exclamation? whether he lives or dies, Madame Bruyere, will, by his generous friendſhip, be exempted from every care and ſorrow."

"I beſeech you Sir," ſaid ſhe, in a tremulous voice, "to dwell no longer on this ſubject, I hope the Marquis has many, very many happy years to live." "May that friendly hope be realized," returned he, "for he truly deſerves to live and be happy."

He then changed the ſubject to ſpeak of the Chevalier, whom he deſcribed in the true ſpirit of ridicule, that at another time would have diverted his companion, but her mind was ſo diſturbed, her thoughts ſo abſorbed in what ſhe had heard in the courſe of that day, that every attempt to amuſe her, failed of its effect. At the end of their walk they all met in a beautiful pavilion on the ſkirts of a wood, and when every one was ſaluting each other, and admiring the variety of beauties that ſurrounded this ſweet ſpot,

ſhe

ſhe alone threw herſelf upon a ſofa, pale, ſpiritleſs and ſilent.

She drew the attention of the company, "Ah!" cried the Counteſs, taking her hand, "you deceived us, you are not well, heavens! how you tremble, why would you oblige us at this expence?" The Marquis drew near, viſibly agitated—"I ſhall never forgive myſelf for propoſing this long walk; Chevalier, if you love me, haſten back, and order a carriage hither inſtantly."

"By no means," ſaid ſhe, endeavouring to recover herſelf, "I ſhall do very well preſently." "Not for a thouſand worlds," cried he, with energy, "ſhall you walk back." His warmth again diſconcerted her, ſhe made no reply, but turning, met the eyes of Mademoiſelle with ſuch an expreſſion of malice and contempt; that greatly hurt, ſhe roſe, and taking the offered arm of the Counteſs, attempted to her, ſome excuſes for being ſo eaſily overcome with fatigue; ſhe was overheard.

"Mighty pretty!" cried Mademoiſelle, with a haughty toſs of her head, "extremely well carried off; but the veil is too flimſy," added ſhe, in a low tone, "the affectation of being ill, to engage the attention of a certain perſon whoſe abſence was the cauſe, as his preſence will be the cure, for your temporary indiſpoſition, is too obvious to need any farther comment."

She turned from them with a forced laugh, "what whim poſſeſſes this giddy girl now," ſaid the Counteſs, careleſsly, "but what ſhe ſays is of little conſequence; I am only ſorry that I urged you to this walk, not foreſeeing the conſequences, or be aſſured my amiable friend, I would much rather have requeſted permiſſion to ſit in your apartment."

"You are all goodneſs," replied Madame Bruyere, thankful for a kindneſs that helped to reſtore her, "I am greatly concerned my folly has given an interruption to your amuſement, I am now much better,"—ſhe in fact was ſo, the behaviour of

of the Counteſs counteracted the impertinent obſervations of Mademoiſelle, whom ſhe ſaw in converſation with Monſieur le Grand, and had no doubt by his air and manner that he was reproving her rude petulance.

The Marquis, ſhe *now* obſerved, *did* look ill and unhappy, he rather avoided, than ſought, to entertain her, though his eyes followed her ſteps every where. The Chevalier returned in the carriage, Madame would fain have declined it, but the general voice was againſt her, "I hope," ſaid the Chevalier, "you will think me entitled to the honour of being the lady's eſcort, ſince I had the pleaſure of procuring the carriage for her."

"You have entirely diſtanced your pretenſions," anſwered Monſieur le Grand, "you have had *your ſhare* of pleaſure in the accommodation. It remains for the Marquis and myſelf to diſpute the preeminence you want; but I ſhall wave all my claims in his favour, he looks ſo much like an invalid himſelf, I am perſuaded the

company will allow of his pretenſions to eſcort Madame, independent of his right as maſter of his houſe."

The Chevalier bowed with a malicious ſmile, and turned upon his heel; his ſiſter darted a look of fury at the unfortunate Madame, who was almoſt ſinking into the earth, and dreaded the company of the Marquis worſe than death; but how could ſhe decline it without being particular, and appearing ungrateful? before ſhe could determine, he took her hand, and ſhe was ſeated in the carriage without having ſaid one word.

Inexpreſſibly diſconcerted, ſhe almoſt gaſped for breath, and her extreme diſorder could not paſs unnoticed by her companion. "Ah! Madame," ſaid he, in a tender voice, "how I adore, yet at the ſame time lament, that charming ſenſibility which too evidently undermines your conſtitution—let me beſeech you moſt amiable of women to ſtruggle againſt thoſe feelings which deſtroy your peace. My friend *muſt* be well, had any illneſs,

illneſs, or misfortune befallen him, my faithful ſervant would not have delayed the communication a moment.

"Why he has not written to his charming wife, to his affectionate friend, I cannot indeed account for, nor well excuſe; but we will not condemn him unheard, a very few days will no doubt remove our mutual anxiety. Ah! if his feelings were in uniſon with mine, how eagerly would he ſnatch every opportunity to pour out his tranſports, to chaſe every care and ſorrow from that lovely boſom! O, I do not doubt his affection, his gratitude."

"Nor do *I* my lord," ſaid Madame Bruyere, interrupting him with ſpirit, "I can *never doubt*; from a full conviction that the boſom of *my huſband* is the ſeat of honour, truth and virtue." "That generous, noble confidence!" exclaimed he, "who could wrong it? not my friend I am perſuaded—happy, happy man! though deprived of fortune, proſcribed

and baniſhed, yet is he in my eyes, the moſt enviable of mankind!"

Madame was again ſtruck dumb, he obſerved her ſome moments in ſilence, then breathing a deep ſigh, "forgive me, my charming friend, the heart ſometimes overcharged gives vent to its feelings without waiting to take counſel from judgment; this ſubject diſtreſſes you, we will therefore change it. I have not yet had an opportunity of aſking your opinion of our gueſts; you have already obtained *their* admiration and eſteem, who indeed can withhold them? I long to know if all, or either are ſo happy as to merit *your* approbation."

"My lord," anſwered ſhe, "I am very ill qualified to offer my opinion on merits ſo little known to me, that 'tis ſcarce poſſible I ſhould do them juſtice; they are *your friends*, and as ſuch entitled to my reſpect and attention: I preſume not to inveſtigate characters that apparently poſſeſs *your* eſteem."

"I

"I fear," ſaid he, "the frivolity of the Chevalier ſometimes oppreſſes you, he is a gay young man juſt beginning his career in the great world, and has had the good fortune to be well received by the ladies; conſequently he thinks pretty well of himſelf, and has not learnt to diſtinguiſh between the volatile coquetry of faſhionable belles, and that profound reſpect and admiration ſuperior characters are entitled to; hence, he is often times troubleſome without intending to be impertinent.

"Mademoiſelle is generally admired for her perſon, wit, and ſpirit; but ſhe has not the tenderneſs and diſcretion of our Counteſs: the one permits her vivacity to outrun her prudence, the other though gay can always recal her fugitive ſpirits in time not to wound a mind of ſenſibility; yet if Mademoiſelle has *not* equal delicacy with the Counteſs, neither is ſhe devoid of good nature, and a little more experience may mature her judg-

ment, and make her a valuable young woman.

"As to Monſieur le Grand, he is the terror of all young fops and pert demoiſelles; he is a little too cynical, and would have young perſons as prudent and diſcreet at eighteen, as at the matronly age of forty; and meeting with perpetual diſappointments in his unreaſonable expectations, it frequently renders him crabbed, ſatyrical, and ſometimes affrontive.

"He has one of the beſt hearts in the world; his knowledge of mankind, ſtudy, and a judgment that may always be relied on, render him a valuable and moſt uſeful friend, where the heart may repoſe in ſafety, and depend upon the beſt advice in all emergencies."

"This is, indeed, an eſtimable character," cried Madame Bruyere involuntarily. "It is," returned the Marquis; "and his long attachment to me I hold, not only as the greateſt bleſſing, but as the greateſt honour I can boaſt.—With this gentleman Madame Bruyere is a decided favourite;

favourite; a woman ſuch as his wiſhes and fancy had often drawn, he ſaid, but ſuch as he never hoped to meet with: he ſpeaks of you with rapture."

"Spare me, my Lord," ſaid ſhe, interrupting him; "I ſhould ill deſerve his good opinion, if I permitted vanity." At that moment the wheel of the chaiſe flew off, and they were overturned into the road.

Madame Bruyere was thrown out with ſuch violence, that for a moment ſhe loſt her ſenſes; when they returned, ſhe found herſelf in the arms of the Marquis, and juſt heard the words—"Never, never will I ſurvive this adorable woman! What an unhappy wretch I am!" She opened her eyes a ſecond time, and, attempting to move, found her left hand broke, and that ſhe was incapable of raiſing herſelf; the attempt proved that ſhe was alive and ſenſible. He took no pains to conceal his tranſports, or his feelings: his ardent exclamations, his tender expreſſions, ſhocked and alarmed her; ſhe was in agonies of

pain,

pain, but ſhe ſtifled her groans, that ſhe might not engage his aſſiduities.

He had ſent off a ſervant for a ſurgeon and a carriage the moment he recovered from the fall, and ſaw Madame Bruyere lying ſenſeleſs in the road; he was really what he appeared to be, nearly diſtracted; and when convinced that ſhe was living, the ſight of her broken arm, the death-like paleneſs in her cheeks, and the pain he knew ſhe muſt ſuffer, altogether threw him off his guard, and the ardent paſſion of his ſoul was openly avowed in expreſſions that ſeemed to burſt his heart-ſtrings.

The ſituation of the poor lady was truly pitiable; obliged to remain in the ſupporting arms, to be preſſed to the boſom of a man who had unguardedly diſcloſed a ſecret ſhe ought never to have heard from him; to know ſhe could no longer affect ignorance as to the nature of his ſentiments, and that the accident which had unfortunately happened, afforded him an opportunity to diſplay that tenderneſs and attention which he might naturally

expreſs

expreſs for a woman, and a friend, in her ſituation, and which ſhe could not repreſs without an appearance of ingratitude in the eyes of the family.

All theſe conſiderations preſſing upon her mind in a moment, added to the pain ſhe felt, turned her ſo extremely ſick and faint, that ſhe was apprehenſive of again loſing her ſenſes; and the Marquis again by his agonizing exclamations encreaſed her diſorder, though happily ſhe did not faint; and in a very ſhort time the ſervants returned with a ſurgeon and a carriage.

She was carried into it by the Marquis, and ſtill ſupported by his encircling arms; the diſtance was but trifling from his caſtle, where they arrived before the walking party, and Madame Bruyere was immediately put to bed.

On examining her hurts, the ſurgeon found her ſhoulder was very much bruiſed, as well as the arm broke; the latter he ſet very ſkilfully, and after applying proper embrocations to the bruiſes, he deſired ſhe

might be kept very quiet, and he hoped no ill conſequences would enſue.

Her faithful Philip was nearly diſtracted, but he was obliged to repreſs his own grief to ſpeak comfort to her darling children, whoſe cries and tears wrung his heart, and he feared would diſturb their tender mother. She requeſted to ſee them, ſpoke cheerfully, aſſured them ſhe ſhould be quite well in a day or two, and that the accident was of too trifling a nature to occaſion any ſerious alarm.

The poor Henrietta entreated that ſhe might ſit with her dear mamma—"I will not ſpeak or move," ſaid ſhe, "only let me have the delight of looking at you, or giving you what you want: do not drive me from you, indeed I will not ſpeak."—The dear mamma could not refuſe this tender requeſt, and Henrietta was permitted to remain in the room.

In the mean time the company returned to the caſtle, and were aſtoniſhed to find all the ſervants in a buſtle, the Marquis looking

looking extremely diſcompoſed, and walking the room with an air of diſtraction.—"My God!" exclaimed the Counteſs, "what has happened?—where is Madame Bruyere?" In a few words they were informed of the accident, and the Marquis took no pains to diſguiſe the anguiſh of his feelings.

The Counteſs expreſſed much ſorrow, Mademoiſelle uttered a few nothing-meaning words, accompanied with a malicious ſmile, and ſide-glance at the Marquis. The gentlemen ſeemed much affected, and the Counteſs withdrew to offer her attendance "to her charming friend."

She found Madame, to appearance, much worſe than ſhe expected; it was not ſimply the accident that diſtreſſed her, from that ſhe dreaded no ill conſequence, it was her ſituation, her reſidence in that houſe, the maſter of which had unequivocally declared a violent and unjuſtifiable paſſion for her: that ſhe muſt leave his caſtle admitted of no heſitation, but *where* could ſhe go, how receive her dear Bruyere's letters, or what cauſe aſſign to him for

for quitting a friend to whom ſhe had been entruſted as a ſacred pledge of friendſhip?

Occupied by ſuch reflections that agonized her ſpirits, it was not ſurpriſing that the Counteſs found her with all the marks of an approaching violent fever. She ſaluted and condoled with her in a voice of tenderneſs and compaſſion, beſought her to tranquillize her mind, and the accident would very ſoon be got the better of.

"For the ſake of your children, for the repoſe of your friends," added ſhe, "keep up your ſpirits; we cannot loſe your charming ſociety; and our good friend the Marquis will certainly loſe his ſenſes, if you do not endeavour to get well. I aſſure you he is in ſuch a miſerable way, that I ſhall fear for his head, if not for his life, unleſs you ſoon return to us: never was there in the boſom of man more reſpect and tender *friendſhip* than our good friend feels for you."

"Aſſure yourſelf, Madame," anſwered the

the invalid, who had liſtened much diſturbed to this harangue, and which tended but little to compoſe the tumults in *her* boſom—" Aſſure yourſelf it is both my inclination and my duty to exert every poſſible effort to get well; the accident is comparatively but trifling, and in a day or two I hope to make my acknowledgments to all my friends who are ſolicitous about me."

The Counteſs ſaw that ſhe ſpoke with pain, and therefore requeſted ſhe would try to reſt for a few hours, when ſhe would return, and paſs the night by her bed-ſide. This the other ſtrenuouſly oppoſed; and ſo decidedly, that the Counteſs gave up the conteſt, and retired, after many profeſſions of affection and friendſhip.

On entering the ſaloon the Marquis flew to her—" Ah! how is Madame Bruyere?" " Why, to be ſincere with you," replied ſhe, " ſhe has every ſymptom of a fever." " My God!" exclaimed he, ſtriking his forehead, " I ſhall be diſtracted! I have, thank Heaven, had the precau-

precaution to ſend for a phyſician, and I expect him within this hour: would he were come!"

"Upon my honour," cried Mademoiſelle, with a ſudden elevation of her head, and a ſmile that ſpoke the malice of her heart, "this has turned out a mighty unlucky day, pregnant with events and diſcoveries:—here is a lady has broke her arm; a gentleman in danger of breaking his heart; and a tender love affair, diſguiſed under the name of *friendſhip*, burſt upon us at once without equivocation or diſguiſe.

"To be ſure there is nothing extraordinary in it; Madame Bruyere has ſome charms, a grateful heart; the Marquis is not without *his* attractions, and is the *good friend* of her huſband, that huſband abroad and incapable of making his *own* acknowledgments, what more juſt and natural than that the lady ſhould be liberal and profuſe in *her* gratitude, when the favours reſt ſo entirely on her."

"Really," ſaid Monſieur le Grand, "I had

had no idea till this day of the exquiſite ſenſibility of Madame Bruyere; when I remarked to her that the Marquis looked ill, I thought ſhe would have ſunk on the ground, her ſentiments were ſo tender, ſo expreſſive of friendſhip (and what is ſo lively as female friendſhip!) that I adored the ſuſceptibility of her heart; though I do not, Mademoiſelle," affecting a grave look, "enter into *your* tranſlation of her ſentiments, I place them all to the ſcore of gratitude."

"Oh, doubtleſs!" replied ſhe, "I can mean nothing more than that the lady is *grateful*."

"Pray a truce to your obſervations and conjectures," ſaid the artful Marquis; "Monſieur Bruyere is my friend, and my warm regard for his lady I neither affect to diſguiſe nor deny, any more than I can my reſtleſs anxiety for the arrival of the phyſician."

"Well, well," returned Mademoiſelle, "your frankneſs deſerves ſome credit; and for my part, I never interfere, or interrupt

terrupt people's amours; 'tis their own affair: but pray don't let us be in the dolorous way that affects lovers, let us carve out ſome amuſement for to-morrow:—Will your gravity condeſcend to direct, or coincide in ſome pleaſurable ſcheme?" ſaid ſhe to Monſieur le Grand. "We ſhall ſee to-morrow," he replied, "the viſions of the night may be favourable, and inſpire you with ſome bright ideas on that ſubject."

The arrival of the phyſician was that moment announced, and the Counteſs attended him to the chamber of Madame Bruyere; ſhe was embarraſſed and diſpleaſed, ſhe wiſhed not to have been broken in upon, but the evil was without a remedy, and ſhe ſubmitted to anſwer an abundance of frivolous queſtions, with a very ill grace.

He frankly told her "ſhe had a fever, muſt be let blood, and have a bliſter;" as thoſe were two things ſhe had an utter averſion to, ſhe made no ſcruple to tell him ſo, and begged for that night ſhe might be permitted to direct herſelf; if

ſhe

ſhe was worſe in the morning, ſhe muſt ſubmit to his ſuperior knowledge, but ſhe was convinced that reſt and barley-water would anſwer every purpoſe for that night.

"But you will *not* reſt," returned he ſomewhat provoked, "if you do not comply with my preſcriptions." "Pardon me, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "I feel now a propenſity to ſleep, if I may be indulged in it." The fact was, Madame had rather a prejudice againſt medical gentlemen; ſhe knew it was not liberal to entertain this prejudice, but ſhe could not, or would not, try to conquer it; and in the preſent uneaſy ſtate of her mind, ſhe was vexed at the intruſion. The Counteſs, who ſaw her agitation, and thought oppoſition to her will might tend to bring on the diſorder they apprehended, juſt as the doctor ſeemed inclined to anſwer with ſome aſperity, took him by the arm—"Come, my dear Sir, oblige my charming friend, defer your preſcriptions till the morning, ſhe will then more readily attend to your advice."

vice." "Moſt certainly," cried Madame, in a quick tone.

The phyſician, whoſe conſequence was hurt, by being ſent for without having his orders obeyed, rather permitted the Counteſs to lead him, than willingly to accompany her; and on his entrance into the parlour, when the Marquis haſtily met him, and enquired of his patient, he could not conceal his chagrin.

"It was needleſs, my Lord, to give yourſelf and me this unneceſſary trouble." "What," cried the Marquis, with vivacity, "is ſhe then in a fair way of doing well?" "Not that I know of," returned the doctor, "unleſs ſhe gets well from perverſeneſs; ladies are ſo obſtinate and ſelf-willed, that they feed on their own humours ſometimes, and truly this lady has as little politeneſs and complaiſance as the worſt of them."

"Who do you ſpeak of?" aſked the Marquis in ſurpriſe, "not of Madame Bruyere?" "Indeed I do," replied the affronted

affronted doctor, "she will submit to no advice, conform to no regimen, and chuses to act for herself." "I cannot see our amiable friend in this character," said the Marquis, looking at the Countess, "surely she is not deranged!" "No, no," answered she, "be not uneasy, she thinks better of her situation than you do, and has only desired a reprieve from bleeding and blistering till to-morrow; then, if necessary, she will submit to the Doctor's decrees."

"*If necessary*," retorted he in a rage, "I say 'tis *now* absolutely requisite; but the lady may be assured, I shall not volunteer my services again, *she* shall send, before I return to that chamber, and expose myself to such perverseness a second time."

"You are certainly right," cried Mademoiselle, "I never heard of such rudeness; this is the lady with delicate feelings, and *exquisite sensibility*.—O, people do not discover themselves presently, but time and chance throws them off their guard,

and then their characters are developed." No reply was made; the Counteſs was ſpeaking aſide to the Marquis, Monſieur le Grand had addreſſed the irritated phyſician, and the Chevalier was buſy before the glaſs adjuſting his hair, and examining his teeth.

When the Counteſs had finiſhed her whiſper, the Marquis entreated the offended ſon of Galen to remain that night at the caſtle: as he knew his own intereſt, and the generoſity of the inviter, upon ſome occaſions, he complied; "though he muſt, in conſequence of his ſtay, neglect ſeveral patients very profitable to him." This hint was not unregarded; and the Marquis expreſſed his ſenſe of the obligation.

Madame Bruyere, left to herſelf, really felt leſs pain than ſhe expected; in the courſe of the night her fever abated, though ſhe had no reſt, and was perplexed with forming a hundred plans for changing her reſidence. Towards morning, "tired nature ſought repoſe," and ſhe dropt into a re-

a refreſhing ſleep, that laſted ſeveral hours.

The mortified phyſician, on viſiting his patient, was obliged to confeſs, bleeding and bliſtering were *not* abſolutely requiſite, and that ſurgical attendance was all ſhe required. However, he did not chuſe to give up his prognoſtics, and therefore, after receiving a very handſome fee, he "wiſhed with all his heart that the lady *might continue* to mend, and that his aſſiſtance *might not* be required when he ſhould be leſs at leiſure to attend on her."

The Marquis was in raptures to find ſhe was leſs dangerouſly hurt than he apprehended, the Counteſs was unbounded in her friendly congratulations, and even Mademoiſelle condeſcended to make her ſome compliments. The ſurgeon, after viſiting her, confirmed all their hopes, and allowed of her ſeeing company who knew how to regulate their converſation and hours.

In a few days Madame Bruyere was able to entertain the whole party in her dreſſing-room; but every one took notice of a

thoughtfulneſs, a dejection of ſpirits, no efforts of theirs or her own could for a moment remove. Her ſadneſs ſpread like a contagion; the Marquis relapſed into his former melancholy; Monſieur le Grand looked grave, and ſpoke little; the Counteſs ſeemed full of ſorrow, from ſympathy; Mademoiſelle grew out of humour; and the Chevalier, after once laviſhing his rapturous compliments, had nothing to ſay, and yawned for a change of ſcene.

One morning the Counteſs paid the invalid an early viſit, *her* countenance beſpoke grief and vexation, Madame Bruyere's a fixed melancholy; ſhe was ſtruck, however, with the appearance of her friend—"Ah! my dear Counteſs," ſaid ſhe tenderly, "are you ill?"

"I am worſe than ill," anſwered ſhe, throwing herſelf into a chair, "I am miſerable; our dear Marquis——" "What of him?" exclaimed Madame haſtily. "Alas!" replied ſhe, "'tis with reluctance I wound your feeling heart, but he is *your victim*; I have juſt learnt that the phyſician

phyſician told Monſieur le Grand he may not poſſibly live a month, his heart is broken, his health deſtroyed by a hopeleſs paſſion: yes, my too lovely friend, he is *your victim!*"

No words can ſpeak the anguiſh, the horror that ſeized every faculty of this unhappy woman. "O," ſaid ſhe, ſtarting from her ſeat, "let me fly, let me quit this caſtle inſtantly; *I* that have brought ſorrow and diſgrace on my huſband's benefactor!"

"Stay, my too ſuſceptible friend," ſaid the Counteſs; "accuſe not yourſelf, paſſion is involuntary, the feelings of our hearts cannot be criminal, love for an amiable object the leaſt ſo of any.—'Sorrow,' you may have given birth to, but 'diſgrace!' what diſgrace can be attached to a paſſion ſo delicate, ſo reſpectful, that he has borne the decline of health, the loſs of happineſs, and gently ſinks untimely to the grave, without uttering one complaint, without daring to form one wiſh.

"Oh! what a noble heart is ſacrificed to——what? Imaginary phantoms, raiſed by vulgar prejudices, that trample on gratitude, compaſſion, and every virtuous ſentiment that ought to govern an enlightened mind."

Madame Bruyere had fallen back in her chair under inexpreſſible agitations; the laſt words of the Counteſs effectually recalled her ſenſes: fixing her expreſſive eyes on her face—"Am I in a dream?" cried ſhe; "have I heard honour, virtue, and the ſacred duties of a wife, called 'vulgar prejudices!' Would *you*, Madame, counſel me to ſacrifice myſelf, my huſband, and my children, to a diſgraceful ſentiment I bluſh at giving birth to?"

"No," anſwered the Counteſs, without the leaſt emotion; "no, let the Marquis *die*, he has amply provided for *you*; exult in your romantic virtue, boaſt of your victim, and when your cool, indifferent huſband returns, perhaps your grateful treatment of *his* friend and *your* benefactor

neſactor may deſerve his thanks, and recal his ſlumbering affection."

The laſt word ſcarcely reached her ear, before Madame Bruyere fell ſenſeleſs on the floor. Inſtant aſſiſtance was had, and the poor lady ſoon recovered: ſeeing the Counteſs buſied about her, ſhe averted her eyes from an object that ſhocked them.

That artful woman ſaw ſhe had gone too far, "Judge me not ſeverely," whiſpered ſhe, "pity and forgive." She ventured to give a ſignal to the ſervant to retire; then falling on her knees by the ſide of the bed, ſhe ſeized the reluctant hand of Madame Bruyere, "Pardon me, moſt amiable of women, I hardly know what my diſtraction uttered.

"The relation of Monſieur le Grand, the ſight of that beſt of men lying on a couch pale and almoſt lifeleſs, worked me to a degree of phrenzy; I thought at that moment I could have given up life, honour, and every thing dear to me, to ſave

ſhe nobleſt of mankind, the univerſal benefactor of the unfortunate.

"He had no claims on *my gratitude* it was true, but he had on my reſpect and eſteem; in the enthuſiaſm of the moment I flew to you: forgive my impetuoſity, pardon all that you could not approve, and impute it to madneſs and grief:—the effects of my intemperate zeal I ſhall never forgive myſelf."

Every ſyllable ſunk into the heart of Madame Bruyere; and when ſhe heard her ſighs, and ſaw her tears, ſhe could no longer with-hold the pardon ſhe ſolicited; ſhe preſſed her hand—"I do forgive, I make allowances for your feelings, and the temporary diſtraction of a friendly heart: mine is wounded beyond all cure. By what means came this fatal ſecret to be diſcloſed this day, to overwhelm me with ſhame and grief?"

"To be ſincere with you," replied the Counteſs, "I have known it for ſome time; and aſſured that it muſt be a hope-

leſs

leſs paſſion, I perſuaded him to invite company, thinking the charms and coquetry of Mademoiſelle Serac might ſerve to divert his thoughts from a more lovely object; but my ſcheme failed of ſucceſs, the contraſt between her and you ſerved only to encreaſe and nouriſh his fatal prepoſſeſſion.

"The accident that befel you diſcovered to every one that ſecret ſo carefully hid; his diſtraction explained the nature of his ſentiments, and that pert, envious young woman had the effrontery to ſay, 'ſhe had long obſerved the good underſtanding between you.'

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Madame Bruyere. "Hear me out," ſaid the Counteſs—"Monſieur le Grand was extremely angry with her, but ſhe was incorrigible, and made no ſcruple of jeering the Marquis before his ſervants; thank Heaven, ſhe and her brother have been diſgracefully ſent out of the caſtle this day, though I tremble at her malice.—But to return:

" When the phyſician was here, Monſieur le Grand requeſted his opinion of our dear friend; he ſaid 'his conſtitution was broken up, that he had ſome heavy diſorder that preyed on his heart, and it was impoſſible to ſave him.' This Le Grand kept from me, and buſied himſelf in procuring remedies for his friend; all were ineffectual: you muſt have ſeen the progreſſion of his diſorder. This morning, Mademoiſelle Serac obſerving his extreme dejection, made ſuch free uſe of her tongue at your expence, that in a rage he inſiſted upon her leaving the caſtle inſtantly. Her pride took the alarm, the carriage was ordered, and within an hour ſhe and her brother had left us.

" The poor Marquis, wounded by her inſinuations againſt you, and fatigued with the exertion he had made, fell into fainting fits; from which, when a little recovered, he cried, preſſing my hand feebly, 'My dear couſin, when I am no more, procure for me one tear of compaſſion

paſſion from Madame Bruyere—I die her victim !'

" I heard no more, but, in a ſtate of frantic grief, flew to your apartment—the reſt you know; and now, my ſweet friend, accord to me your forgiveneſs, and allow for friendſhip, conſanguinity, and that eſteem, even your rigid virtue muſt allow, the unhappy Marquis is entitled to."

Here was a tale to pour into the ear of a grateful, ſuſceptible woman; ſhe knew not, ſhe did not ſuſpect, what a jumble of truth and falſehood were crouded together, and repreſented with the moſt diabolical art and deſign. Madame Bruyere ſaw nothing but the deplorable ſtate of the Marquis, and trembled at the malice of Mademoiſelle Serac, her talkative imprudence, and the reports which might injure her reputation.

She was ſilent for ſome time; the Counteſs ſtill knelt by her ſide; at length the unhappy woman turned her eyes on *her*, " Riſe, Madame, I beſeech you; I cannot but forgive you; let me have this

day to myſelf, to-morrow I will ſee the Marquis: would to heaven I had never entered this caſtle!"

The Counteſs kiſſed her hand and retired: the agitations ſhe had raiſed in the boſom of Madame Bruyere were attended with the moſt painful effects; that unhappy lady ſaw no ray of comfort to cheer her future proſpects.—The ſilence of her beloved huſband alarmed and terrified her; ſhe trembled for his health and ſafety; ſhe had no doubt of his honour or affection for his family; from whence then could proceed that ſilence that pained her, but from incapacity to write?

When added to this, ſhe reflected on all ſhe had heard, the neceſſity of coming to ſome deciſive plan, the interview ſhe ſaw ſhe muſt have with the Marquis on a ſubject ſo diſtreſſing to both parties; all theſe reflections crouding on her mind, overcame her ſpirits, and for ſome hours it was with difficulty the ſervant could keep life in her.

Her faintings had again brought the Coun-

Counteſs to her room; but when her ſenſes were more compoſed, ſhe thanked that lady with an expreſſion the other underſtood as a wiſh that ſhe ſhould withdraw; ſhe obeyed the intimation, and Madame Bruyere, left with her darling children, ſought in their tender careſſes to bury the painful diſorder of her mind, and from her duty to them to ſtruggle for that fortitude ſhe ſeemed now called upon to exert.

The morning came, and the dreaded interview agitated her exceedingly; her arm was not painful, and the conſequences of the accident were by no means to be apprehended from the goodneſs of her conſtitution; yet the hurry of her ſpirits had given her a feveriſh appearance, and the trembling of her heart cauſed her to ſpeak with difficulty; in this ſtate ſhe was found when the ſervant announced a meſſage from the Marquis, requeſting permiſſion to wait on her.

She affected no delay for what ſhe knew was unavoidable; but collecting all her for-

fortitude, roſe to receive him with a dignified calmneſs he had little expected from the report of the Counteſs; he appeared the moſt agitated of the two, and certainly did look pale, weak, and an object of compaſſion: ſhe *felt* this, but preſerved her acquired ſteadineſs.

When ſeated, he congratulated himſelf on her recovery from an accident that had worn ſuch a frightful complexion, and which muſt have been attended with ſuch pain to her. She thanked him politely, and after a little pauſe to recollect herſelf, thus addreſſed him:

"I muſt ever exceedingly regret, my Lord, that the misfortunes of my beloved huſband induced him to intrude upon your hoſpitality, and have brought anxiety, trouble, and expence, in return for friendſhip and generoſity; that unaccountable ſilence ſo diſtreſſing to me, and which even your friendly endeavours cannot excuſe, ſo as to do away my apprehenſions for his ſafety, overwhelms me with grief and ſuſpenſe. Spiritleſs and unhappy, com-

company is painful to me, and the only poſſible chance I have of feeling any degree of tranquillity muſt reſult from retirement; I therefore preſume to ſolicit your permiſſion to retire with my children into a convent———"

"Good God, Madame,!" cried the Marquis, interrupting her, "what is it you propoſe? Would you ſhorten the ſmall remnant of my days by depriving me of the only object that renders life deſirable? Fear not that I ſhall long intrude upon *your* compaſſion or generoſity, ſorrow and deſpair will ſoon terminate an exiſtence hateful to myſelf, ſince of no value in your eyes; and then, Madame, you will find yourſelf miſtreſs here.—A convent! no, never, while *I can* oppoſe it, will I, can I, give my aſſent to a deſign ſo cruel.

"But, alas! what are my rights, how is *my* approbation eſſential to the concluſion of any plan *you* have formed? Why do you refine on cruelty by bidding me pronounce my own death? Go, Madame, go; forſake a wretched a man, whoſe involun-

voluntary preſumption has incurred your hatred and diſdain. I can not detain you, and my death will ſoon ſatisfy that ſeverity of principle, which can ſacrifice all the tender claims upon a generous ſoul, to a too rigid idea of ties, neglected and undeſerved.

"Yes, go," continued he, falling at her feet, "fly the wretch who adores you, who is ſinking to an untimely grave from his ineffectual ſtruggles to ſubdue a paſſion interwoven with his exiſtence, and which he never intended ſhould have been diſcovered to you, till death had precluded *him* from offending, and *you* from a uſeleſs regret and diſdain."

What became of the unhappy Madame Bruyere, at this open avowal of ſentiments ſhe had not expected from himſelf, when ſhe ſaw him at her feet, pale, trembling, and ſcarce able to ſupport the agitation of his feelings, her friend and benefactor!—She burſt into tears, "Riſe, Sir," ſhe cried, "for heaven's ſake do not thus diſtreſs me; I will ſtay, I will not go; let me

me be the victim to the misfortunes that purſue me; but leave me now, if you would ſave me from diſtraction."

He aroſe with difficulty, "Forgive me," ſaid he mournfully, "think not of me, purſue your own plans, procure happineſs to yourſelf; and in my laſt moments I ſhall expire well ſatisfied if tranquillity and future affluence removes all ſorrow from *your* boſom; and if through *my* hands you receive the bleſſings you ſo well deſerve." With a profound bow he tottered out of the room.

The variety of emotions that aſſailed the ſoul of Madame Bruyere are inexpreſſible; impelled by every ſentiment of honour and virtue to quit the caſtle, ſhe found herſelf dragged back by claims of pity, of gratitude, and tender conſideration, ſhe felt irreſiſtible.

"Ah!" exclaimed ſhe, "will fortune never be weary of perſecuting an innocent family! This laſt blow redoubles on me every evil I have ſuffered.

"O my dear Bruyere, my much loved

huſband!

huſband! would to heaven we had never entered this houſe, or that you had never forſaken me! How light would have been every ſorrow, had I participated with you all the evils that poverty could inflict, compared to the agoniſing ſuſpenſe, the torturing pangs I now endure!"

She threw herſelf on her bed, and a violent guſh of tears a little removed the heavy oppreſſion of her heart; ſhe had not long indulged the temporary relief, before her ſervant announced Monſieur Le Grand. She roſe quickly to receive him. He is a man of ſteadineſs, of virtue and ſentiment; to him I will be unreſerved, thought ſhe; good and diſintereſted, he will doubtleſs adviſe and counſel me.

Monſieur Le Grand approached her with reſpect, and an air of compaſſion; after a few general compliments, ſhe took courage and opened herſelf very frankly on the cauſe of her preſent inquietude. He heard her in ſilence, and with a look of concern, that beſpoke a feeling heart. When ſhe had finiſhed her little narrative,

and

and entreated his counſel as a man of honour, and a friend to an unfortunate and almoſt friendleſs woman; to her infinite aſtoniſhment he aſked her abruptly, "If ſhe conceived what the world called chaſtity, to be the only virtue a woman ought to obſerve; and if there were no other duties of equal importance, requiſite to ſtamp the character of a female, as a woman of honour and real virtue?"

Startled as much by the ſolemnity of his air and manner, as by the extraordinary queſtion he aſked, ſhe was incapable of ſpeaking for ſome moments; at length, "You will pardon me, Sir, if I do not immediately comprehend to what this queſtion tends; but certainly I do not think *there are* many duties that have as ſtrong claims upon a woman of ſentiment and honour as chaſtity.

"But I believe you cannot deny, that it rarely happens when a woman forgets the reſpect due to herſelf, to delicacy, to thoſe firſt impreſſions of honour and decorum, and to the eſtabliſhed opinions of man-

mankind; if betrayed by weakneſs, or ſeduced by any plauſible arguments, ſhe is tempted to violate that innate principle of virtue I believe every female is born with —Whatever may be her motives, confuſion, regret, and ſorrow will ever attend her, and muſt embitter every deluſive pleaſure.

" If ſhe has children how painful her ſituation! With what confidence can *ſhe* give *them* leſſons of virtue and prudence whoſe example gives a lie to her precepts; if they are good and amiable ſhe muſt bluſh, and be humbled before them; if they are imprudent and infamous, ſhe can have no right to reprove, but take the evil to herſelf, and feel that from her own ill conduct their follies muſt originate.

" Thus, Sir, you muſt allow, that though chaſtity is not the *only* virtue a woman ſhould obſerve, it is of ſuch conſequence, ſo much the leading feature, that muſt give her dignity in every action of her life; and ſo eſſential to the happineſs and good conduct of all thoſe connected with

with her, that the forfeiture of it degrades her in her own eyes, deprives her of all reverence or reſpect from your ſex, effectually bars her from the countenance and friendſhip of ſuch women as are truly eſtimable, and ſinks her on a level with the moſt deſpicable."

"You are warm, Madame," ſaid Le Grand, confuſed at the energy of her words and manner; you have made a fine eulogium on chaſtity, and it does you honour; but I cannot be convinced that the obſervance of any one *ſingle* virtue is a counterbalance for the neglect of all the others.—*Gratitude*, in my opinion, is the firſt virtue in a noble ſoul."

"When confined within proper bounds, I allow it to be one of our *firſt* duties," anſwered ſhe, "but if my benefactor requires as an acknowledgment for favours, ſuch returns as honour, and a ſuperior duty calls upon me juſtly to refuſe: if any man confers obligations with ſelfiſh views, that muſt prove injurious to the perſon obliged; in my opinion he has no cauſe

cauſe to boaſt of his generoſity, and the perſon benefited by ſuch favours, is exonerated from every imputation of ingratitude, if they cannot be repaid as he expects."

"You do well, Madame," ſaid he, coldly, "to juſtify your own conduct; I reſpect you greatly, but I have no idea of that inflexibility of diſpoſition which can view the miſeries of another with apathy, and triumph in giving pain; I knew not that indifference and inhumanity were conſtitutional in you: I confeſs I formed a very different opinion of your character.

"But you are right, Madame, perſevere in the ſyſtem of cruelty that you have adopted, it is the only plan that will enſure you the poſſeſſion of this caſtle, unincumbered with its unfortunate maſter."

Haſtily riſing, he made her a low bow, and darted out of the room.

No words can deſcribe the feelings of the poor lady thus cruelly beſet by the mean, artful ſchemes of the Marquis and his aſſociates. While ſhe was revolving in her mind all that had been ſaid, the baſe

Le Grand returned to the ſaloon, and repeated to the Marquis the foregoing converſation. "Neither tenderneſs, perſuaſion, threats, nor benefits, will have any effect on this cold, obſtinate woman," ſaid he,—"if you really find her neceſſary to your peace, you muſt purſue vigorous meaſures, and *compel* her to your arms: all gentle methods will fail, be aſſured."

"Curſed fate!" cried the Marquis, "that I ſhould be ſo infatuated with this woman, that I can know no reſt till ſhe is mine; and mine ſhe ſhall be, by every ſaint in the calender! Already my peace, my health is injured by the violence of my paſſion; but I will not fall a ſacrifice to an ungrateful woman."

"Nor ſhall you," ſaid the Counteſs, "I have a ſcheme in embrio which cannot fail of ſucceſs, which ſhall gratify your paſſion, and ſatisfy that reſentment you ought to feel againſt this proud, inſolent, ungrateful creature." What this ſcheme was, ſhe did not then communicate.

Mean time Madame Bruyere, after reflecting

flecting on every thing that had paſſed at various times, between the Counteſs, Monſieur Le Grand, the Marquis and herſelf, began to open her eyes, and perceive that thoſe friends, as they called themſelves, (how proſtituted the name!) were entirely in the intereſt of the Marquis; that it was too evident they endeavoured to ſap the foundation of her virtue, and render her infamous to prove her gratitude.

Alarmed for the conſequences of their intrigues, ſhe had no reſource but to conſult with her faithful Philip; and leave the caſtle with all poſſible expedition, ſince ſhe could no longer confide in any inmate of that houſe.

After ſome hours given to reflection, ſhe deſired the ſervant to order Philip's attendance immediately. He very ſoon appeared, and, after a ſhort preface, ſhe told him, reaſons of the utmoſt importance required ſhe ſhould leave the caſtle, and having cauſe to fear her deſign would be oppoſed if known, ſhe confided to him the care of enquiring out an aſylum where ſhe

ſhe and her children might be received, and ſecured from the intruſion of any one.

Tears burſt from the old man's eyes, "Thank God!" ſaid he, "I never believed the infamous tale, ſo grating to my ears"—"What tale?" demanded ſhe—"That, that you had forgotten my poor maſter, and, forgive me Madame, I cannot repeat to you the ſtory about you and the Marquis, which ſorely wounded my poor heart."

"How!" exclaimed ſhe, "have they dared to aſperſe my character? O, that infamous Mademoiſelle de Serac; I remember now her baſe inſinuations before the ſervants—Juſt God! my reputation traduced—O, let me fly this hated houſe."

"Do not torment yourſelf, Madame," ſaid Philip, "I will loſe no time in my enquiries; whilſt *I* have life, no injury ſhall happen to you, or your dear children: my heart is now relieved from a heavy pain."

"What," ſaid Madame Bruyere, "could *you*, Philip, believe I ſhould ever forget,

or wrong your beloved maſter?" "Forgive me, Madame," he returned, "'tis a wicked world, and there is much art and deceit in this houſe.—But my diligence ſhall atone for my credulity." He left her haſtily, and ſhe endeavoured to acquire more compoſure and fortitude, convinced that ſhe had yet one faithful friend, on whom ſhe could rely.

The following morning, when the Counteſs paid her a viſit, not a ſyllable eſcaped from either, relative to the converſations of the preceding day; and Madame being infinitely amended in her health, however perplexed in her mind, ſhe made no objection to the propoſal of the Counteſs, to join the dinner-party below. She felt confuſed and abaſhed when ſhe received the Marquis's compliment for her appearance; but after a few moments ſhe recovered ſufficiently to caſt a tranſient glance round on the company, which conſiſted of the inmates of the caſtle, and two gentlemen, ſtrangers to her, and whom ſhe was told were foreigners.

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The Marquis looked ill, and agitated; Monſieur Le Grand grave and contemptuous; the Counteſs, more than ever, tender and obliging.

In the courſe of the dinner, one of the gueſts mentioned ſomething about Liſbon, Madame Bruyere inſtantly caught the ſound, "Have you lately arrived from Liſbon, Sir?" aſked ſhe, eagerly—her eyes in the ſame moment fell on the Marquis, whoſe looks beſpoke alarm, and his eye ſeemed to dictate a reply.—"Not lately, Madame," anſwered the gentleman in bad French, "'tis ſome months ſince I left it."

She was greatly diſappointed, and not leſs uneaſy at the perturbation viſible in the features of the Marquis.—There muſt be ſome cauſe for that alarm at her queſtion; he ſeemed to look at her now and then with an expreſſion of ſorrow and tender complacence; the Counteſs too addreſſed her in a voice of tenderneſs bordering on pity. She felt diſturbed, miſerable and apprehenſive, from what cauſe ſhe knew not; but certain that there did

exiſt a cauſe that actuated the feelings of every one preſent, ſhe grew extremely reſtleſs; and ſoon after the dinner was removed, ſhe made an apology, and retired to her own room.

Some time after, when loſt in the moſt painful reflections, ſhe was weeping in the boſom of her ſweet Henrietta, whoſe arms encircled her neck, and who was ſoothing her dear mamma by a thouſand tender expreſſions, the door opened, and the Counteſs appeared.

"Forgive my intruſion," ſaid ſhe, "I was alarmed at your abrupt manner of leaving us; I feared you were ill, and could not reſt till I followed you."

"You are very kind," anſwered Madame, "I was indeed ſo much affected by the mention of Liſbon, it brought ſo many painful images to my view, that I could no longer ſupport my place at the table."—"Alas! my dear Madame," returned the Counteſs, "the evils of life are ſufficiently oppreſſive when they befal us, we ought not to meet them half-way; but the *extreme*

treme ſenſibility of your mind makes you feel as much for *imaginary* ills, if not more, than others do for real misfortunes."

"*Are* my misfortunes then imaginary?" aſked Madame Bruyere. Piqued at the emphaſis ſhe had laid on ſome words—"At leaſt you have none but what admit of cure," replied the Counteſs; "and a lady of your underſtanding need not be told, that the evils we lament are often deſigned as trials of our fortitude, and are frequently productive of ſuch bleſſings as ſhort-ſighted mortals cannot perceive."

"I doubt neither the juſtice nor goodneſs of heaven," ſaid Madame Bruyere; "but there are calamities in life that bear down patience, and ſubdue our fortitude; and few are more grievous than ſuſpenſe, when the object deareſt to our heart is far from us, and his deſtiny unknown."

"I confeſs," anſwered the Counteſs, "I am ſo far of your opinion, that the moſt dreadful certainty of a misfortune, is preferable to a ſtate of anxiety and doubt; and a mind ſo ſuperior to the ge-

nerality of your ſex, as your's is; ſo capable of heroiſm, and unequalled fortitude; a ſoul like your's will dignify misfortunes, and, like a phœnix, riſe more brilliant from the aſhes of its hopes."

"To what tends all this," cried Madame trembling, "what have you to tell me, Madame, that requires ſuch little deſerved compliments?"

"I come, moſt reluctantly indeed, my deareſt Madame Bruyere, to put your truſt in heaven"——"O," exclaimed ſhe, interrupting her, "O, he is dead, my Bruyere is loſt to me for ever!" She fixed her enquiring eye on the Counteſs, who caſt down her's without ſpeaking.—"Juſt heaven, thy will be done!" added the poor unfortunate, and fell back in her chair, not fainting, but panting, trembling, and, with a look of wild horror, that appalled the woman before her, callous as ſhe was.

She ſcreamed for help, and, on the entrance of the ſervant, Madame Bruyere was laid on the bed, ſtill with the ſame vacant,

vacant, eager look, and inſenſible to every thing that was done for her.

The news ſoon flew over the the houſe, a phyſician was ſent for, poor Philip could not be kept from her apartment, he drew near, he wrung his hands, while floods of tears guſhed from his eyes, and fell on the hands of his lady, as he leaned over her—She ſtarted, her eyes turned and fixed on him, ſhe ſcreamed, and inſtantly fell into convulſions.

Philip was turned out of the room, while proper remedies were applied, and, after a time, were ſucceſsful in reſtoring her ſenſes; but ſhe was ſo extremely low, that the phyſician ordered every one but the attendants to withdraw, and leave her for ſome hours to reſt and quiet.

The Counteſs returned to the ſaloon, and made her report to the Marquis, who was walking in violent agitation; "I know not how to approve of this ſcheme," ſaid he, "or in what manner I ſhall be benefited, ſhould ſhe die—horror is in the thought—I ſhall be for ever miſerable—

and if ſhe lives, I muſt wait the ſlow return of health and ſpirits, and her curſed notions of decorum and punctilio, before I can hope for ſucceſs."

"How impatient you are," ſaid ſhe, "were you likely ever to ſucceed without compulſion? Would you rather ſee her in the arms of her huſband than in the embraces of death? But as to dying fear not, few women break their hearts for their huſbands, and there are many reaſons that will induce her to accept of your offer; and ſhould ſhe refuſe it, then you have no meaſures to obſerve with her, it will be your own fault if ſhe eſcapes you."

While this vile woman was meanly the implement, and indeed the abettor of the baſe Marquis, the unhappy object of their machinations was reſtored to a ſenſe of her miſeries, and the irreparable misfortune that was the climax of her ſorrows.—To paint the heartfelt anguiſh of a tender wife in that ſad hour is impoſſible; the huſband of her deareſt affections, the father of her children, was now no more; a double

a double duty was transferred to her, ſhe muſt be the guide, the ſupport of thoſe loved objects, the only pledges of a moſt lively and tender union. To heaven ſhe addreſſed her ſupplications for fortitude to ſupport her trials, and for ſtrength and virtue to perform her maternal duties.

"Alas!" cried ſhe in mental agony, "their dear preceptor, is loſt to them for ever; no more will they hang on his arm, or climb his knee to receive their leſſons, and the endearing kiſs of reward for their diligence—who now ſhall direct their ſtudies, ſhall form their ductile minds? poor, friendleſs, and proſcribed, their unhappy mother borne down by every calamity that can oppreſs human nature; *ſhe* only remains to teach them the hard leſſon of patience under ſufferings, and inure them to a life of frugality and labour.

"Yes, my children, *my* example ſhall exemplify my precepts; for you I will labour, and forget the happineſs of my paſt

life, as a gay viſion raiſed by fancy, that vaniſhes when the day appears; all, all, ſhall be forgotten, but the virtues of my ever dear Bruyere, thoſe are engraven on my heart."

She demanded to ſee her children, they were brought to her, and then the friendly tears flowed that gave relief to her agonized boſom; they were told they had loſt a father, and were ſenſible enough to regret a dear indulgent parent, the conſtant theme of their mother's praiſes, and whoſe tender careſſes were remembered with delight.

After mingling their tears ſhe found ſome relief, and was anxious to know every particular of the ſad event ſhe deplored. She ſent for the Counteſs, who obeyed the ſummons not a little agitated, conſcious guilt ſhook her boſom, and ſhe appeared with a confuſed look, and downcaſt eye, which was miſtaken by poor Madame Bruyere for a ſympathiſing concern.

"I

"I ſee your generous pity, Madame," ſaid ſhe, "and well indeed I deſerve compaſſion, for my miſery is unſpeakable; it can receive no addition, I therefore entreat you to inform me of all the particulars which have come to your knowledge of my heavy misfortune: you ſee I am calm, and can bear it all."

The Counteſs lifted her eyes, but when ſhe beheld the ſtrong emotions that agitated the whole form of the unhappy woman, the piercing eye, the trembling lips, and woe worn countenance; ſhe ſhrunk from the view.

"Why, my amiable friend, why will you ſeek to add to ſorrow like your's?" aſked ſhe; "'Tis near ſix weeks ſince the much lamented event took place; a violent fever from the blood being over heated—be ſatisfied that every care and attention was paid, and that the duration of ſuffering was ſhort; five days terminated the whole."

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed ſhe, And is this all, is this the concluſion of

my loved huſband's misfortunes? to die unknown, unpitied, among ſtrangers; O, why was not I with him in that awful hour! merciful heaven, teach me reſignation!" She claſped her hands, and ſeemed for ſome moments to be loſt in aſpirations beyond this world, and cauſed a momentary terror to the worthleſs woman before her.

Madame Bruyere ſoon recovered to a more calm and dignified ſorrow; ſhe wept not, ſhe exclaimed no more; ſhe thanked the Counteſs for her tender concern, and hoped in another day ſhe ſhould ſee her with compoſure. That Lady gladly withdrew, and the remainder of the day the afflicted widow was permitted to paſs undiſturbed.

Three days were dragged on heavily by all parties, Madame Bruyere had been endeavouring to collect her fortitude, and to conſider on ſome plan for the ſupport of herſelf and children—Philip had been conſulted, he was almoſt broken hearted, but upon his knees vowed never to forſake

ſake his dear Lady, or her precious children.

After various ſchemes adopted, and again rejected, one appeared the moſt likely to be ſucceſsful—Philip had in his younger days travelled with Monſieur Bruyere's father to England, they had paſſed three years there; he had acquired the language very tolerably, which he had never forgotten; and was alſo pretty well acquainted with the cuſtoms and manners of the people. Madame Bruyere was highly accompliſhed, he propoſed ſhe ſhould offer herſelf as a governeſs in ſome noble family, and hoped a few of his old maſter's friends might yet be in exiſtence, and prove uſeful to his unfortunate family; the ſmall remains of their paternal fortune would ſupport them for ſome time with frugality, and if Madame ſhould be received into any family, or if, what would be more deſirable ſhe could procure pupils to attend, ſhe might be enabled to ſave ſomething for her dear fatherleſs children.

In

In conſequence of revolving this plan, it was decided that Madame Bruyere ſhould announce her intended departure, and firmly perſevere in it.

When the afflicted Lady made her appearance below, the Marquis advanced to lead her to a chair, he would have ſpoken, the words died on his tongue, a ſigh burſt from his boſom, he bowed, and ſeated himſelf at a ſmall diſtance from her—ſilence pervaded for ſome moments, which was broken by the entrance of the Counteſs with Henrietta in her hand; "forgive me," ſaid ſhe, "if I have infringed any rules, you muſt permit this ſweet girl to be my gueſt to day."

"You are very obliging in intention I am ſure," anſwered Madame Bruyere, "and if Henrietta is ſenſible of the favour you do her, I can make no objection to your wiſhes." The Marquis kiſſed the little girl's hand, "Ah!" ſaid he, "who would not wiſh for ſuch a lovely addition to our ſociety."

He endeavoured to recover his ſpirits, he

he ſought to amuſe the company by many little anecdotes intereſting but not lively; the moſt exact decorum, the utmoſt tenderneſs, and more than common reſpect was viſible in his addreſs to Madame Bruyere; ſhe ſaw, and felt it; ſhe beheld his pale face, his trembling frame, and had not the courage to wound him by a declaration of her intended plan: her own ſpirits would not ſuffer her to contend the point at that time, and ſhe was obliged to defer it 'till another day.

Henrietta charmed with the kindneſs of the Counteſs, and proud of the polite praiſes paid to her by the Marquis, appeared to forget her grief, and ſtrove by a thouſand engaging words and actions to conciliate the favour ſhe was ſo pleaſed with. The rapturous praiſes of the Marquis, and the tender careſſes he beſtowed on her, at length rouzed the attention of Madame Bruyere, "Henrietta muſt not preſume on indulgence," ſaid ſhe, "I hope ſhe is grateful for the honour you have conferred on her; 'tis

'tis now time that ſhe ſhould return to her brother."

"The ſmalleſt intimation of your's Madame, muſt be immediately complied with," replied the Marquis, "however we may regret it on this occaſion." He rung the bell, and a ſervant attended the child to her apartment.

"You muſt not monopoliſe this charming young creature," cried the Marquis, "I hope to ſee her the ornament of her ſex, and the boaſt of her admiring friends, if it pleaſes heaven to ſpare my life."

"Alas! my Lord," anſwered Madame Bruyere, tears ſtarting from her eyes," *my* children are deſtined to move in a humble ſphere of life, to carve out their own fortunes, and only by virtue and induſtry can have any claims to notice. A certainty of this is one great cauſe for the retirement I accuſtom them to; children are too eaſily pleaſed with ſhew and ſplendour: from ſuperior company and accommodations, their minds often imbibe high and improper ideas; painful to correct, difficult

difficult to eradicate. Therefore 'tis, that I implant in them a ſenſe of their own inferiority, and that every favour that is ſhewn to them, is an obligation and honour, they have not the ſmalleſt right to expect, but from the humility and propriety of their own behaviour."

"Good heavens! what a mother!" cried the Marquis, "Yet, let me congratulate myſelf that as a friend and a guardian"—"How, my Lord," exclaimed Madame, "as a *guardian* did you ſay?" "Yes Madame, my dear lamented friend honoured me with his confidence, and repoſed in me that ſacred truſt; I hold them now as a ſolemn charge upon my honour and gratitude; they are *my* children by *adoption* and *affection*."

Never was conſternation equal to what Madame Bruyere felt; the mention of her loved huſband, had cauſed the tears ſhe had tried to ſuppreſs, to ſtream down her cheeks; but this truſt, this claim, was ſo ſtrange, for a few moments ſhe could not recover herſelf to ſpeak. "Pardon me,"

ſhe

ſhe cried exceſſively agitated, "how, when, was this preſumptuous truſt made, have you heard? O, ſpeak, relieve my anxiety, I know not how to expreſs what I feel."

"I am deeply concerned," anſwered the Marquis with reſpect and tenderneſs, "inexpreſſibly hurt that my warmth outſtept my prudence at this improper time, but I have ſaid too much now, to attempt any further concealment; here Madame," added he, drawing out a paper, which he put into her hand, "when you retire peruſe that paper, and let me hope, you will confirm and accord to the wiſhes of one ſo deſervedly dear to us—permit me only to obſerve, that from the ill ſtate of my health, and encreaſing weakneſs, I have taken the precaution to fulfil every deſire intimated in that paper, and your dear children, whether I live or die, will always be authoriſed to keep the firſt company, with a certainty of a handſome proviſion, though perhaps not ſuitable to their merits."

While the Marquis ſpoke, ſhe held the paper

paper in her ſtill extended hand, her eyes fixed on his face; and ſuch a vacant look of aſtoniſhment, that ſeeing no change in her countenance, he was alarmed; the Counteſs called for drops, and pouring ſome down her throat, the effect rouſed her from that wild torpid ſtate ſhe was in, and eagerly catching the Counteſs by the hand, "O," ſaid ſhe, "aſſiſt me to retire."

They left the room, and when in her apartment, a little recovered, ſhe begged to be left alone. The Counteſs withdrew, but it was ſome time before ſhe had ſtrength and courage to open the paper yet in her hand—at length acquiring fortitude from neceſſity, ſhe read the following contents:

"My dear Marquis,

"I quit you impreſſed with the higheſt reſpect and gratitude, for the favours you laviſh on an affectionate and faithful heart. I have no fears reſpecting the buſineſs I have undertaken, there are few dangers to appre-

apprehend, and my life is in the hands of a juſt God. The parting from my dear and excellent wife, from my ſweet darlings, is the only pang I feel; but to your faith, your friendſhip I commit them; be you the comforter and protector of my Louiſa, the *guardian* of my children—yes, my friend, I leave them a *ſacred depoſit* in your hands, be to them *a father*, never forſake the widow and the orphans, ſhould it pleaſe heaven to call me from them; ſo ſhall you be honoured in this world, and for ever bleſſed in the next.

" The little property I have been enabled to ſave from the wreck of my fortunes, is all my Louiſa's; the beſt of wives, of mothers, and the moſt reſpectable of women; the deareſt object of my affections—O, protect her from a perſecuting world! my children! to *them* extend that bounty you deſigned for me; ſhould this meet your eyes when I am no more, remember you are joint guardian with my wife, for thoſe darlings that twine about my heart: 'tis a ſacred truſt, that I reſt well

well aſſured is placed in the hands of a man of honour, and a faithful friend. May the Almighty bleſs you now and for ever!

" Henry Bruyere."

Madame Bruyere read this letter over three times, every ſyllable penetrating to her heart, yet hardly ſenſible of the contents; ſhe ſaw only the effuſions of an affectionate heart agoniſed for his wife and children; ſhe wept, ſhe kiſſed the precious teſtimony of his love a hundred times—" O, my Bruyere, my dear ill-fated huſband, had your Louiſa ſupported your head, had ſhe kiſſed the burning lips that I know dwelt on her name, and ſucked the laſt ſigh that iſſued from that noble heart—what a comparative eaſe to what I now endure!"

She wept, ſhe read again, and the contents grew more impreſſive; " 'tis true," ſhe cried, " *he has* made the Marquis the guardian of his children, alas! he knew not the conſequence of the truſt he repoſed in him; that this friend ſo loved, ſo truſted, preſumed to entertain an improper

per paſſion for his wife—gracious heaven! what now is to become of me? if he aſſerts his claim, as he ſeems inclined to do, I cannot tear my children from him; I dare not diſpute the will of my Bruyere; yet how much rather would I labour for them, than let them hang dependent on another's bounty."

The entrance of Philip was moſt welcome, without a ſingle comment ſhe gave him the paper, and was herſelf ſo overpowered, ſo loſt in thought, that he read it twice over before ſhe lifted her eyes to his face; it was bathed in tears—"well, my friend," ſaid ſhe, "what now becomes of that plan which this morning gave ſome tranquillity to my boſom? *I* indeed am free, but my poor children have a maſter, he will aſſert his rights, what will my feeble oppoſition do againſt *his power?* can I leave my children? can I ſtay here? O, what an alternative, it admits not of any, never, never, will I be ſeparated from the dear pledges of a tender affection.—— O, Philip, thou faithful ſervant of an in-

dulgent maſter, thou wilt not forſake me, tell me, tell me, what can I do?"

In this manner did poor Madame Bruyere rave, every nerve agitated, every limb trembling with eagerneſs; he gave back the letter; "if Madame," ſaid he, "the Marquis deſerves this confidence, if he wiſhes to comply with the requeſt of his friend; pardon me, Madame, but I ſee not how you can oppoſe it, in juſtice to thoſe dear children, who may be ſo eſſentially benefited—but is he worthy of the truſt, does he ſeem anxious to perform the duties required of him?"

"O, yes," replied ſhe, "he *claims* his rights, but what then becomes me to do?" "Since you condeſcend to aſk me, Madame," replied he reſpectfully, "I think he ought not to object, if you wiſh, that yourſelf and Mademoiſelle Henriotta, ſhould retire to a Convent for her education, and Monſieur Henry may either have a precepton, or be ſent to an academy."

"You are right my good Philip, this muſt

muſt be our preſent plan, and heaven grant that I may be allowed to compleat it; but what then becomes of you?" "Think not of me, Madame," anſwered he, be aſſured I will never be far from you; my good maſter's bounty, added to the legacy bequeathed by his reſpected father, my firſt benefactor, preclude me from all apprehenſion of want, and I ſhall follow your ſteps wherever they lead."

The grateful heart of Madame Bruyere, ſenſibly felt the force of this honeſt attachment, and ſhe thanked heaven, that ſhe had one friend in whom ſhe could repoſe an entire confidence. Philip withdrew as the Counteſs entered the apartment, apologiſing for intruding contrary to her prohibition, but her exceſſive anxiety for her charming friend, would not permit her to reſt any where; ſhe had tried to divert her ſteps, they invariably turned towards her apartment.

Politeneſs would have demanded a civil return to this attention, but Madame, above art or duplicity herſelf, ſaw in this viſit

viſit more than civility, ſhe thought it originated in tenderneſs and affection: ſhe therefore held out her hands, and preſſing one of the Counteſs's between them; "ah!" ſaid ſhe, "what a bleſſing is a feeling heart, ſince it can communicate a degree of comfort to the afflicted! Your ſympathy, my dear Counteſs, gives unſpeakable delight; to the wretched and forlorn, what treaſure can beſtow equal relief, with the tender affections of a friend!"

The Counteſs bluſhed at her own worthleſſneſs, what can be ſo painful, ſo truly mortifying as undeſerved praiſe? This woman wanted not for ſenſe, nature had done her part, her own evil inclinations, and the indulgence of her paſſions, had counteracted the bleſſings deſigned for her, and corrupted her heart; diſſipation, and its concomitant avarice, to ſupply her extravagant pleaſures, had overpowered every good trait that was natural to her mind, had made her a ſlave to vice, and the tool of an unprincipled man.

Something like remorſe fluttered at her heart, and ſuffuſed her countenance with a bluſh, but ſhe repreſſed the gentle monitor, and ſteeled her feelings againſt honour and compaſſion; ſhe had gone too far to recede now, and beſides, felt no ſmall ſhare of envy and hatred againſt an object her conſcience told her was in every degree ſo infinitely ſuperior to herſelf.

Stimulated, therefore, by ſo many baneful paſſions, ſhe eaſily conquered the feeble emotions of pity, and reſolved to perſevere in the cruel buſineſs ſhe had engaged in, that ſhe might humble her rival to the duſt.

Madame Bruyere not conceiving that ſuch a character exiſted in a female form, entered freely into a detail of her embarraſſing ſituation; ſhe ſpoke highly of the Marquis, ſhe neither doubted his honour or generoſity; ſhe could make no objections to the will of her dear lamented huſband, as his noble friend ſeemed determined to obey it in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. But decorum, decency, every ſacred claim upon

upon a woman in her ſituation, called upon her to paſs the firſt year of her widowhood in a convent; and ſhe hoped ſhe might expect to be indulged with the company of her loved Henrietta; as a mother, and a joint guardian, ſuch a requeſt ought not to be refuſed.—Such were her hopes and wiſhes, and ſhe beſought the kind Counteſs to favour her with her ſentiments.

"There are particular circumſtances, which I forbear now to mention," replied ſhe, "but which you *cannot, ought not* to be indifferent to, that I think will militate againſt the plan you mention; but it becomes not me to ſpeak on the ſubject, my heart is ſo divided between you and my dear couſin, that I am by no means an unprejudiced perſon, and therefore not capable of judging what is moſt fit to be done. I only know that your happineſs is eſſential to the repoſe of your friends, and that I have too high an opinion of your underſtanding to believe you will ſacrifice every tender claim upon your

gratitude and generoſity, to the idle and abſurd prejudices that govern faſtidious people under the names of decorum and decency."

"I ſee," ſaid Madame Bruyere, with a ſigh, "that I am fated to be miſerable, marked out as an example of the little dependence we ought to place on happineſs in this life! Six months back, how great was my felicity, how proudly I looked forward to the future! and in my huſband and children ſaw every flattering proſpect of permanent happineſs.

"Alas! ſee now the reverſe, judge of the pangs I feel, and conceive whether I deſerve an addition to them from the hands of friendſhip! Never, never did my ſainted huſband believe his children and their mother could, or ought to be ſeparated:——nor ſhall they," ſaid ſhe, wildly raiſing her voice, "no power on earth ſhall tear them from me!"

"Good Heavens!" cried the Counteſs, "why do you thus needleſsly terrify yourſelf---is there on earth a being that could

wiſh

wiſh it? O, my amiable friend, you ought to know the Marquis better---Has he any will but your's?---Do not *your* wiſhes govern *his?*---And can you doubt but that your happineſs occupies every feeling of his heart? You are unjuſt, my friend, baniſh thoſe fears that diſtract your mind, and look forward to every proſpect of peace and felicity, the boſom of the moſt ardent friendſhip can procure for *you*, and the the *darling objects* of your affection."

Madame Bruyere, ſoothed by this equivocal ſpeech, and aſhamed of her own impatience, made a handſome acknowledgment of her error; adding, at the ſame time, "that ſhe ought not indeed to doubt but that the delicate mind of the Marquis would approve of the propriety of her wiſhes." "'Tis yet early days," ſaid the Counteſs, "to ſpeak on the ſubject; give *one* week to mature reflection, and when you have made up your mind on conviction, not from haſty determinations, which are often ſubject to

repentance, then I hope your views will coincide with the wiſhes of your friends."

"I will profit by your advice," anſwered Madame Bruyere; "and if I appear to you impatient and unjuſt, do not impute it to the errors of my heart, but allow for the diſtraction of my mind, and the weakneſs of my head."

To oblige the Counteſs, ſhe returned to the ſaloon; ſhe trembled when the Marquis led her to her ſeat; ſhe caſt her eyes on Monſieur le Grand, he bowed to her with a frankneſs in his air and manner ſhe had never before obſerved, and in the general converſation he ſpoke with vivacity different from the uſual tenor of his diſcourſe. The alteration attracted her notice, but ſhe gave him credit for the motive, which ſhe ſuppoſed was to amuſe and engage her attention.

The following day ſhe acquainted Philip with what had paſſed between her and the Counteſs, and her intention to defer ſpeaking to the Marquis for a few days: "Not," continued ſhe, "from any doubts of

of the propriety of my determination, or the poſſibility of any change in my ſentiments, but that my reſolution may appear to be the reſult of a mature deliberation, and the ſteps I propoſe taking, the decided plan of reaſon."

The week ſoon glided away; Madame Bruyere felt herſelf the ſole object of attention: the reſpect, next to reverence, which ſhe received from the Marquis, the tender aſſiduities of the Counteſs, and the uncommon polite and agreeable converſation of Monſieur le Grand, altogether gratified and amuſed her when in company, but the anxieties and ſorrows of the night dearly paid for the few hours that gave a diverſity to her thoughts. She more than ever, longed for the ſolemn tranquillity of a convent, where ſhe might indulge, without reſtraint, that poignant grief that ſeemed rooted in her heart.

It was now a fortnight ſince the fatal event had been announced to her that had deſtroyed her peace; ſhe had for two or three days been endeavouring to collect

reſolution to ſpeak to the Marquis; ſhe could not avoid taking notice, that a great amendment appeared to have taken place in his health, and occaſionally in his ſpirits; ſhe was pleaſed at the alteration, it took a weight off her mind; he was no longer in that dangerous ſtate that had terrified his friends, returning health animated his whole form, and ſhe thanked Heaven for it.

One morning, after a ſleepleſs night, ſhe roſe with a fixed deſign to enter upon the ſubject of her wiſhes with the Marquis. It was a fine ſpring morning, ſhe ſtrolled into the the garden; the opening flowers, the early bloſſoms, and the ſweet notes of the little warblers hailing the return of the enlivening ſun, had its uſual effects upon a mind of ſenſibility like Madame Bruyere's; ſhe felt a ſoft and pleaſing ſerenity ſtealing over her ſenſes, ſhe viewed the ſurrounding objects with complacency, her mind partook in the vernal delight.

" Ah!" cried ſhe, " in a ſmall peaceful cottage, with my dear children by my ſide,

ſide, far from the gay and great, what happy hours might glide by, thus enjoying the beauties of nature, and contemplating the works of the bounteous Creator!—An humble retreat, in a pleaſant ſituation, would be the extent of my wiſhes."

The Marquis interrupted her:—"Heaven forbid, my charming friend, that the world ſhould be deprived of its greateſt ornament!---Forgive me, Madame, accident brought me to this ſpot; as you pronounced your laſt words, I was too near to withdraw without the chance of being ſeen, and your conjectures might have been unfavourable; of the two evils, therefore, I was obliged to interrupt you: but if I intrude, ſpeak dear Madame, and, however reluctantly, I will leave you immediately."

"No, my Lord," ſaid ſhe, recovering from her firſt ſurpriſe and confuſion, "far from intruding, you come moſt opportunely, I wiſhed to ſpeak with you without witneſſes." "You do me honour, Madame," anſwered he; "I am moſt

happy when I can gratify your wiſhes, of every kind: I attend your commands with pleaſure." "Then I entreat a patient attention, my Lord, on a ſubject the neareſt to my heart; bear with me if in any ſhape I appear to you wrong, condeſcend to judge favourably of my motives, and be aſſured I have well weighed every conſideration, and that my wiſhes and intentions are the reſult of reaſon and propriety."

"After this ſolemn preparation, Madame," anſwered the Marquis gravely, "I have only to attend to the ſubject you do me the honour to communicate." She bowed, and after a ſhort pauſe proceeded thus:

"The ever-lamented event, which has made me wretched, and my children orphans, ſituated as I am, calls upon me to act with prudence and economy. It never could be the preſumptuous wiſh of my dear Bruyere that you ſhould *adopt his* children; from your generoſity and friendſhip, he might hope your friendly aſſiſtance

ance towards placing them in ſome decent, humble mode of life, ſuited to their induſtry and talents: more he had no right to expect.

"That ſmall property in my poſſeſſion is yet enough to board me, and educate my child a few years in a convent, if you inſiſt upon a right to fix her place of reſidence; for my dear Henry I may ſpare a ſmall ſum, not, I fear, ſufficient to educate him as a gentleman, but let him be taught humble expectations, let him learn only the uſeful branches of education, and his expences will not be great.

"Suppoſing, my Lord, that you chuſe to trouble yourſelf in the affairs of an unfortunate family, I aſk your permiſſion to retire into a convent with my child; but *I ſee not why* we ſhould intrude upon your generoſity: if you would have the goodneſs to relinquiſh the right delegated to you by the beſt of huſbands and of fathers, if *I* may be permitted to guide their fortunes and my own, 'tis my wiſh to render the few talents I am miſtreſs of,

ſubſervient to their intereſts; to keep the little ſum I have for future contingencies, and to be allowed the delightful taſk of ſupporting them by my own induſtry in a diſtant country, where no arbitrary power, no unjuſt proſcriptions can follow us.

"Such, my Lord, are the two plans, formed and digeſted by reaſon: as the generous and beſt friend of my late dear huſband, I entreat the favour of your advice, which of the two you think moſt proper for me to follow; the latter, I frankly own, has *my* preference, but I ſhall not decline the other, if it meets *your* preferable choice."

The Marquis liſtened in profound ſilence till ſhe ſtopt:—"I muſt confeſs, Madame," ſaid he, "that I was ill prepared to hear ſuch plans propoſed, as prove that you think me the moſt unworthy of mortals; thank Heaven, my lamented friend did me more juſtice; *he* thought me worthy of a moſt ſacred truſt. *You* deſpiſe, reject the ſervices of a faithful heart; *you* tear you children from a man who loves them,

them, whoſe fortune is devoted to them both by inclination and gratitude; *you* deprive thoſe loved objects of a proper education, of a brilliant eſtabliſhment, to which they are entitled by every principle of juſtice and of honour; *you*, the dear object of a ſainted huſband's affections—*you* counteract his wiſhes, his laſt requeſt, and actuated only by an unjuſt hatred (I muſt call it ſuch) for an unhappy man, the ſummit of whoſe wiſhes were for your's and your children's happineſs; rather than ſee your children made happy by this obnoxious man, you would deprive them of every advantage, expoſe them to the ſcorn and contumely of the world, and wander in a foreign climate oppreſſed by poverty and misfortunes."

During far the latter part of this ſpeech, poor Madame Bruyere had been drowned in tears; the images brought to her view, the concluſions drawn from them, altogether overpowered her.

"Spare me, my Lord, ſpare me!" ſhe cried; "what a hideous monſter do you make

make of me.—Alas! what would I not ſuffer for my children!—*Me*, *I*, 'deprive them of every advantage of fortune, and expoſe them to ſcorn?'—Oh no; my wiſhes only tend to place them above dependence, to ſecure them from fallacious hopes a thouſand cauſes might rob them of, and to teach them, by induſtry and talents, to carve out their own fortunes."

"You conclude me then a villain!" ſaid he warmly; "capable——" "O ſtop, my Lord! for Heaven's ſake, judge not ſo raſhly of an unhappy woman; far be it from me to doubt your principles. I ſee," added ſhe, wringing her hands in an agony, "I am unequal to this conteſt, my ſentiments, my wiſhes are miſconceived, and ideas that ſtrike me with horror are imputed to a heart that is filled only with tenderneſs, gratitude, and ſorrow."

"O, Madame!" ſaid he, reſpectfully taking her hand, "why have you thus cauſeleſsly diſtreſſed us both? Have I a wiſh on earth but to fulfil the ſacred charge of my friend to its utmoſt extent?

And

And can I, *ought I*, to permit a falſe heroiſm, a too ſuſceptible proud heart, (forgive me the expreſſion), that haughty dignity that would reject the ſervices of a grateful and affectionate friend; and rather pine in ſolitude, or wander a ſtranger through a mercileſs world, than gratify the feelings of an obliged man, in the hope of proving his ſenſe of the vaſt debt he owes to the father of your children?

" If, Madame, on reflection, you can reconcile your plans to the regard you feel for thoſe objects, ſo dear to you, to the reſpect that is due to the laſt wiſhes of their dear father; if *I* am become ſo hateful in your eyes, that the ſolitude of a convent is preferable to my caſtle; I muſt ſubmit to my unhappy fate, I have no right to detain *you*, you may make me wretched, but I will not be arbitrary or unjuſt."

" Let me retire," ſaid Madame Bruyere, " I am now unfit for company; forgive me, my Lord, you know not my heart, hatred or injuſtice has no place there:

there: I feel very much diſordered, pray let me retire."

He ſtill held her hand, his lips juſt touched it—" Let this be the pledge of peace; forgive me, deareſt Madame, if my warmth and diſtraction has betrayed me into any unintentional harſhneſs; let me conduct you to the houſe, in the hope that you will ſoon recover; and do me the juſtice to believe, I wiſh for life only that it may be devoted to you and your dear children."

He had ſupported her trembling ſteps now to the door.—" For Heaven's ſake!" cried he, " reſume your tranquillity, favour us with your preſence at the dinner-table, or I ſhall be truly miſerable.—Say, deareſt Madame Bruyere, that you will come; do not drive me to madneſs, under the idea of afflicting or offending you."

She bowed her head—" If poſſible, I will attend you, my Lord." She haſtened to her apartment, and throwing herſelf on the bed, gave free vent to the anguiſh that rent her heart.

She

She revolved every ſyllable that had paſſed, ſhe was ſhocked at the picture he had drawn of her, ſhe trembled at the idea of appearing deſirous to controvert the will of her huſband, whoſe leaſt word had ever been ſacred with her. But he knew not, thought ſhe, that this friend had conceived an unwarrantable paſſion, that there were cauſes that rendered my reſidence in this caſtle both dangerous and improper: 'tis true the Marquis has not failed in reſpect to me; that in ſome boſoms paſſions may be as involuntary as difficult to conquer; that he has alſo ſuffered greatly in his health, and certainly claims my pity, as well as gratitude, for his friendſhip to my dear Bruyere.

But ſtill, added ſhe, ſtill there is a glaring violation of propriety and decorum in my remaining here; yet if he will not part with my children, can I forſake *them?* Can I force them from him, even if their intereſts were *not* ſo cloſely linked with his conſent? Alas! what friends, what reſources have I, againſt his power; and how

how dare I *rob* my children as he calls it, of education and fortune? Well then I will aſk of him for *one* year only, to let my Henrietta paſs with me this ſad year that ought to be devoted to the memory of my beloved huſband; ſure he cannot refuſe *that*, and in the courſe of twelve months how many events may happen to occaſion new plans, and freſh deſigns! Having a little tranquillized her mind from neceſſity and reaſon, ſhe concluded it beſt not to irritate him, but to attend the ſummons for dinner. Mean time ſhe called her dear children to her arms, and vowed never to part with them whilſt ſhe had ſtrength or life to protect them.

During the time Madame Bruyere held this ſtruggle with her feelings, the Marquis had related to his aſſociates the preceding converſation in the garden; "Never," ſaid he, "was ſuch an inſolent, proud ſpirit in woman, ſhe ſpurns at the idea of an obligation to me, I love, and hate her; ſhe has now ſtimulated my pride, as well as paſſion, and ſoon, very ſoon, will I conquer

conquer that faſtidious pride that militates againſt *my* wiſhes. I have pretty well ſickened her of her plans I believe, 'tis only to place the bugbear of her huſband's will againſt her ſchemes, and they ſhrink into nothing."

'Tis too degrading to human nature to relate the converſation that followed, and the baſe advice, the malicious joy, that was expreſſed by the treacherous Counteſs, and the contemptible le Grand; ſuffice it to ſay that the trio planned their ſchemes, and triumphed in their expected ſucceſs.

When the dinner hour came, Madame Bruyere attended them, and had not their hearts been callous to every humane feeling, her appearance would have called forth compaſſion and admiration; never did ſorrow look more lovely, and the tremulous agitation of her whole frame demanded aſſiſtance, and reſpect from the moſt indifferent ſpectator: the Marquis flew to aſſiſt her, but his emotions were not thoſe of tenderneſs, they were of the moſt turbulent kind, the unhappy object

of

of them was deceived by the appearance, ſhe readily yielded her hand, for indeed ſhe could with difficulty ſupport herſelf.

What the company wanted in ſincerity, they abundantly ſupplied with a *ſhew of exceſſive* kindneſs; every word ſhe uttered was liſtened to as an oracle, every look was watched with an attention that forerun her wants and wiſhes: in ſhort ſhe was oppreſſed by the conſideration that was paid to her, rather than gratified in being the firſt perſon in the company. She gave their hearts more credit than they deſerved, and imputed the kindneſs that was ſome times troubleſome, to a friendly deſire of alleviating her ſorrows.

Monſieur le Grand was particularly officious, but he had ſunk much in her opinion; the ſentiments he had uttered were ſo inconſiſtent with the character ſhe had formed in her mind on their firſt acquaintance, that it was impoſſible for him to regain her confidence, and as her heart was legible in her expreſſive countenance, he could not avoid being ſenſible of

the coldneſs of her eye, and conſcious that he *merited* that repulſive coldneſs, like moſt baſe minds, he was enraged at her penetration, and was ſtimulated to revenge what he choſe to call an injury.

The Counteſs was more artful, her attentions were tender and reſpectful, ſhe ſeemed to implore the friendſhip of Madame Bruyere, and to ſympathize in the grief ſo viſibly depicted in her features.

Every one had their own ſelfiſh ſchemes in view, and manœuvred accordingly.

When Madame Bruyere was permitted to return to her apartment, ſhe ſent for Philip, and related to him the occurrences of the day. "You ſee me," ſaid ſhe, "diſappointed in every wiſh, baffled in every ſcheme that I had formed; I muſt now aſk a temporary favour, without having a right to dictate for my children. O, Philip, never could your beloved maſter intend that I ſhould only have a negative voice in the diſpoſal of them; he believed that the friend in whom he confided, would coincide with their dear mother."

"But

"But Madame," anſwered her faithful domeſtic, "if the Marquis really intends to provide nobly for thoſe dear children, you cannot wiſh then to riſk a precarious ſubſiſtence for them, at the beſt uncertain, and which too likely might prove fruitleſs. When you talked of going to England, it was in the ſuppoſition that your family was dependant on *your* efforts for ſupport; but if the Marquis will ſettle handſomely on them, will educate them in a ſtyle becoming the children of their noble parents, pardon me Madame, but, have you a right to oppoſe it?"

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, "you do not ſee things in the light that they ſtrike me; 'tis proved that *I have no right* to withdraw them from the Marquis without his conſent, or a conteſt I cannot ſupport—but this ſettlement you ſpeak of, 'tis a weight of obligation that ill accords with my inclinations; beſides, who can anſwer for events, may he not marry, have a family of his own? how eaſy on a thouſand pretences to cancel a ſettlement, where no obligation

obligation binds beyond his own will. What then becomes of children with expectations and an education beyond the ſphere of life they are enabled to ſupport?"

"Should the worſt happen that you apprehend," anſwered Philip, "at leaſt Madame, they will have their talents improved, which will always be an advantage to them however ſituated."

"Well," ſaid ſhe, deeply ſighing, "I ſee that I muſt reſign implicitly to the Marquis, that his will muſt govern the deſtiny of my children, and that I am a mere paſſive inſtrument where I ought to be the principal manager. Do not you forſake me Philip, on you I depend as the laſt anchor of my hopes." Philip made the warmeſt proteſtations of unalterable fidelity, and aſſured her, that her commands ſhould at all times be ſacred with him.

Several days paſſed on without Madame Bruyere having found courage to mention her wiſh of retiring to a convent with Henrietta for one year. The firſt proof

the

the Marquis gave of the authority delegated to him, was an earneſt requeſt that the children might be permitted to viſit in the parlour, at leaſt two thirds of the day; ſhe objected to this, and deduced many forcible reaſons againſt their admiſſion into company: but they were ſo ſtrongly over-ruled, that ſhe ſaw her approbation was aſked merely as a compliment.

A few days after their free introduction, the Marquis ſaid, he had written to ſome friends to procure, or recommend, two perſons of merit and talents, as a preceptor and governeſs for his dear children. "Your generous intention, my Lord," ſaid ſhe, "demands my warmeſt acknowledgments, but I have a favour to requeſt that will render the attendance of one perſon wholly unneceſſary, *for the preſent.*"

"Speak your wiſhes, Madame, to obey them is a favour to myſelf." "There is a convent at Salines, in this neighbourhood; if I may be permitted to take my child

child, my deareſt Henrietta, with me for *one* twelvemonth, I flatter myſelf ſhe will derive ſome little advantages from her mother's care; we ſhall be near enough to receive the honour of our friend's viſits, and if it is your pleaſure to keep my ſon here, I may enjoy the unſpeakable delight of ſeeing him frequently; hard indeed will be the taſk of giving up that ſatisfaction *daily*, but I prefer *his* intereſt to my own indulgence."

The Marquis roſe and traverſed the room in great emotion, at length looking on her with many contending paſſions viſible in his countenance—"I had began to flatter myſelf, Madame, that I enjoyed your confidence, that you had ſome conſideration for a man whoſe whole ſoul is devoted to you and your's; but, fool that I was! I ſee the ſame cold inflexibility prevails, that my houſe, and its unhappy maſter are hateful to you; and that you are ready to give up the preſence, the delight of ſeeing that dear boy, ſooner than confer a favour, an obligation on me,

abſolutely eſſential to my health and peace.

"Yes, Madame," added he, after a ſhort pauſe, ſeeing ſhe was confuſed and made no reply; "yes, I confeſs, that having been accuſtomed to the elegance of your converſation, to the ſweetneſs of your manners, and to the pleaſure of admiring thoſe excellencies that adorn your perſon and mind; and now, the additional charm of the vivacity and opening talents of *my ſweet wards*—I did preſume to hope you would ſacrifice thoſe over-ſtrained notions of punctilios, that rigid decorum ſo injurious to friendſhip, and condeſcend to bend a little to the gratification of thoſe who eſteem and love you; beſides, you will pardon me, Madame if I aſk, to *whoſe opinions* you give up the happineſs of your friends, and the affection of a mother? Who is there out of this caſtle, that are concerned in *your* actions, or who will give themſelves the trouble to diſcriminate between the ſevere forms of propriety, and the kindneſs you owe to your friends?

Situated

Situated as you are, to your own heart only are *you* accountable; and from the dictates of that, thoſe who are ſo affectionately attached to you, your friends, your children had every cauſe to hope, it would decide in their favour."

There were ſeveral parts of this long remonſtrance that diſpleaſed, and alarmed the pride of Madame Bruyere, the latter part particularly, and ſhe anſwered with ſome ſpirit; "It was not neceſſary, Sir, to point out my forlorn ſituation *out of this caſtle*, to remind me of the unreturnable obligations I owe to its maſter; it has been, it proves now, my *misfortune*, to have always made propriety and decorum the firſt conſiderations in every action of my life; and ſtill more unfortunate, I have been but too much indulged, and ſeldom met with any oppoſition to my wiſhes; I have now a new leſſon to learn. Believe me, my Lord, I have a grateful heart, and if a ſmall remains of pride revolts againſt favours, I am yet capable of eſtimating

their value, and feeling the obligation that becomes me.

"None indeed, as you obſerve, intereſt themſelves for an unfortunate proſcribed family but *you*, and how dare I then form wiſhes, not ſanctioned by your approbation! You, my Lord, are the guardian of my children, thoſe beloved children, far dearer to me than life, and your kindneſs to them, demands from me that reſpectful deference to your judgment, which I no longer pretend to reſiſt.

"I am no more a free agent," added ſhe, burſting into tears, "favours and obligations the moſt ſacred, demand from me every ſacrifice: yet do me the juſtice to believe, that *were* I to retire into a convent, I ſhould do ſome violence to my own feelings, in quitting thoſe friends whoſe eſteem does me ſo much honour."

The Marquis threw himſelf on his knees, reſpectfully kiſſed her hand; "Moſt amiable of women, of friends!" ſaid he, "now have you confirmed my happineſs;

deign to pardon my preſumption and impertinence; you and your darling children command both the caſtle and its maſter—your friendſhip and ſociety muſt enſure me health and peace." The Counteſs embraced her, "thoſe tears my ſweet friend are the laſt ſacrifice to pride; you will feel every hour the heartfelt delight of making your friends happy, and a mind like your's muſt partake in the felicity you give to others."

Madame Bruyere could not reſiſt this effuſion of kindneſs, her feelings had been moſt ſenſibly wounded, but when ſhe ſaw the aſperity in her reply was paſſed over, and that they were only willing to acknowledge ſuch parts of it, as were agreeable to their wiſhes; ſhe felt the warmth of their friendſhip as a reproach, and bluſhed for her perſeverance, though reaſon juſtified her in the exertion.

She made ſuitable returns to the Marquis and his couſin, Monſieur le Grand, had not ſpoken; the ſweet children who were hanging in tears on the back of her

chair, ſhe called to her, and embracing them with fervor led them to the Marquis, "In the hands of friendſhip I freely place theſe dear pledges of their father's love and confidence." "And I accept the ſacred truſt," cried he, with vivacity, "how doubly endeared to me when preſented by their excellent mother."

The young folks were delighted, they were grown fond of the Marquis, and had been greatly diſtreſſed by the words and actions in the preceding converſation: *their* tears were eaſily diſperſed, and they embraced the Marquis and their mother alternately.

Indeed a general joy ſeemed to be diffuſed throughout the party, the Marquis grew animated and entertaining; for ſome days that weakneſs which had pervaded his whole frame had gradually given way to renewed ſtrength; his pale cheeks had changed their hue to a more lively colour, and his eyes recovered ſpirit and luſtre.

Madame Bruyere had more than once whiſpered to herſelf, what a ſurpriſing change

change in a man whom his phyſician pronounced in a hopeleſs ſtate; who I was taught to believe could not long exiſt! From what cauſe has he derived recovered health ſo ſuddenly? Sometimes a momentary ſuſpicion, not to his advantage, would croſs her mind, but ſhe would not encourage the idea leſt ſhe ſhould wrong the friend and benefactor of her family.

All thoughts of a convent, or a journey to England, were entirely laid aſide, and ſhe ſubmitted with a tolerable grace to what ſhe could not avoid, giving up her own wiſhes, to oblige others. Philip, who ſaw only the happy proſpects that appeared to dawn on his miſtreſs and her children, was tranſported at the change ſhe announced to him; he bleſſed the generous Marquis a thouſand times, and pronounced the benediction of heaven on him for his tender conſideration of the widow and fatherleſs.

Every day Madame Bruyere heard of the extreme difficulty in procuring proper perſons to ſuperintend the education of

her young folks, but it occaſioned no regrets to her; they had been ſo well inſtructed by their reſpectable father, and ſhe was ſo perfectly accompliſhed, that her dear Henrietta could not poſſibly have a better preceptreſs; and for Henry, though ſhe could not teach him the dead languages, ſhe was very capable of making him a proficient in his own, and in Italian; and to inculcate into his tender mind every juſt and honourable ſentiment, with the more important duties of religion. Therefore ſhe did not think the want of ſuch perſons a matter of much importance for the preſent.

The ſpring was now far advanced, ſummer, and all its ſmiling train of animated objects, began to expand the beauties that ſurrounded the caſtle; Madame Bruyere was an enthuſiaſtic admirer of nature; ſhe paſſed hours in the gardens, in the ſhrubberies with her children; yet never declined thoſe amuſements the gallantry of the Marquis was on a perpetual ſtretch to procure for her. The whole tenour of his be-

behaviour was ſo reſpectfully tender, that ſhe had nothing to complain of; on the contrary, ſhe every day felt an increaſe of eſteem and gratitude, that appeared ſo juſtly his due.

But her happieſt hours were thoſe which ſhe paſſed in the gardens, when, free from reſtraint, ſhe could indulge reflections on paſt happineſs, dwell with rapture on the virtues of her dear and ever lamented Bruyere; then, by a ſad tranſition, view him oppreſſed by misfortunes, ſtruggling with a fatal diſorder in a ſtrange country, far from every dear friend, and at laſt expire unlamented, his laſt ſigh breathed in prayers for his wife and children!

Such were the ideas that for ever crouded on her mind; and when alone, or at night, that ſhe could give free indulgence to her ſighs and tears, it was a luxury much ſuperior to all the amuſements ſo earneſtly ſought for to give her pleaſure.

One morning, after a very indifferent night's reſt, ſhe was tempted by the beauty of the weather to walk earlier than uſual,

and, after ſtrolling about for ſome time, entered the ſame alcove ſhe had formerly been in, when ſhe overheard the Marquis and his couſin on a ſubject that had given her ſo much pain. Careleſsly ſeating herſelf, ſhe happened to throw her eyes round, and beheld a paper lying on the ground, which ſhe pickt up; it ſeemed to be a letter rumpled together; ſhe was turning it, to ſee if there was any addreſs, with an intention to deliver it, when her own name caught her eye, added to the word "ridiculous"—ſhe heſitated a moment, curioſity urged her to read it, but repreſſing the improper idea, ſhe again looked to ſee for the ſuperſcription, there was none; holding it in her hand, ſhe was once tempted to throw it down, but the words "Madame Bruyere," and "ridiculous," again met her eye.

"Since I know not who this paper belongs to," ſaid ſhe, "and my name is ſo oddly mentioned, I ſee not that there can be any impropriety in my looking over what appears to be a fragment." With a

ſort

ſort of reluctant curioſity ſhe ſmoothed the paper, and read theſe words:

"I admire at *your* credulity; you believe the Marquis intends to marry Madame Bruyere; ridiculous! Be aſſured you never were more miſtaken, if you really entertain the idea; but I rather think you deſign to amuſe yourſelf at my expence; partial as you are to your favourite Madame, you cannot pretend to be blind to the connection ſo viſible to every one; and yet you would inſinuate, that becauſe ſhe is a widow, our friend will marry her. Once more I entreat you not to attempt playing on my credulity by ſuch an improbable ſtory—ſhe may do very well for a ſhort time—but the Marquis will not play the fool, take my word for it—Nay, I have been told the daughter of Count———"

The remainder of this fragment was torn off, and Madame Bruyere could only gueſs that it came from Mademoiſelle Serac, and was addreſſed to the Counteſs.

Her mortification and vexation were

extreme; ſhe ſaw this impertinent young woman dared to harbour ſentiments injurious to her honour; and had no doubt but that thoſe ſentiments were freely circulated among her acquaintance, who, though ſtrangers perhaps to Madame Bruyere, yet ſhe ſhrunk with terror from the idea of her name being joined to a ſuſpected reputation.

No ſituation could be more truly perplexing than her's, the Marquis would not part with her children; could ſhe reſolve to leave them? Ah! no; the ſeparation would be worſe than death. Henry indeed ſhe muſt expect, at ſome future period, as his mind expanded, would be placed abroad; but her dear Henrietta, that child ſo dependent on the tender cares of a mother, never, never could ſhe reſign the ſacred truſt of forming *her* mind and manners, into the hands of a ſtranger.

Revolving every painful circumſtance that attended her, in an agony ſhe apoſtrophiſed the ſpirit of her beloved huſband, to be the guardian angel of his chil-

children; and bitterly regretted that his too tender anxiety for her and them, had thrown them ſo entirely into the power of the Marquis. To have fled to ſome diſtant country, to have procured a proviſion for her family by induſtry and independence, would have been the ſummit of her wiſhes, when for ever deprived of their dear father. Every hour her ſpirit revolted againſt the dependent, inactive life ſhe was compelled to bear; and now to know herſelf the object of calumny, of the baſeſt inſinuations, was ſuch an aggravation to her diſtreſs, that, in a torrent of tears, ſhe ſupplicated that Power Supreme, who protects the fatherleſs and widow, to direct her through the difficulties and unpleaſant paths that lay before her.

She ſtill held the odious ſcrap in her hand, that ſo wounded her feelings, ſhe knew not whether to keep or throw it away; but after conſidering for a moment, ſhe thought it beſt that ſhe ſhould deſtroy it, and therefore haſtened to her apartment, and committed it to the flames.

But

But ſhe could not deſtroy the remembrance of it ſo eaſily, it rankled in her boſom: and that morning which had opened ſo lovely to her view, and whoſe beauties had afforded her a temporary tranquillity, now ſeemed clouded in, and darkened every proſpect of repoſe and comfort.

She met the family at the breakfaſt table with a melancholy impreſſed on her features that called forth ſympathy and the tendereſt attentions; but they oppreſſed rather than relieved her: ſhe thought the Counteſs had a ſcrutinizing eye that expreſſed a deſire of reading her very ſoul; the Marquis was *too* aſſiduous: Monſieur Le Grand more than uſually grave, and more than commonly obſequious.

When their repaſt was finiſhed, the Counteſs propoſed a walk; Madame could not object to it, and the former directed her ſteps to the very alcove that had been pregnant with ſo much vexation to Madame Bruyere a few hours before; ſhe felt confuſed, and ſomething like ſhame, for having peruſed a paper that was the property

perty of another; but thoſe ſenſations ſoon gave way to others more affecting, when, after a ſhort pauſe, the Counteſs taking her hand, thus addreſſed her, with a ſolemnity in her air and manner very unuſual.

"My dear Madame Bruyere, I hope you do juſtice to my perfect eſteem and reſpect for you; in that confidence I have undertaken the reluctant taſk of ſpeaking to you on a ſubject that I know muſt be painful; but which friendſhip authoriſes, and your good ſenſe will forgive, from the motives that impel me to be ingenuous."

She ſtopt—"Speak, my dear Counteſs," cried Madame; "go on, I conjure you, your preface alarms me."

"You muſt recollect," reſumed ſhe, "that ſome time ſince, I told you the impertinent conjectures and remarks of Mademoiſelle Serac, had produced a ſerious fracas between her and the Marquis, in conſequence of which ſhe left the caſtle abruptly.—This idle young woman, (for I will not think ſhe has a *bad heart*, though

ſhe

ſhe has too much levity) from her fondneſs for anecdote, and love of conjecture, has very reprehenſibly ſported her opinions in all circles of our general acquaintance, and we have all here received ridiculous letters on the ſubject."

"Juſt heaven!" exclaimed Madame, "how baſely am I traduced, how cruelly humbled!"

"My amiable friend," returned the Counteſs, "you cannot feel more indignation than we all feel at the injuſtice done to the moſt perfect character. The Marquis is in deſpair; you know the nobleneſs of his heart, and *are* not, *can not* be a ſtranger to what paſſes there; he thought, he hoped, that time, perſeverance, his tender affection for your children, and his adoration of their charming mother, would give him ſome little merit in your eyes; and that he might indulge a flattering, though diſtant hope, of being the legal protector of your family.

"The calumnies of this revengeful girl, the avidity with which the world devours ſlander,

ſlander, call upon him for an immediate refutation of the baſe aſperſions, and for an active and honourable amendment to you, for what you unjuſtly ſuffer from his profound admiration and eſteem.

"In ſhort, my dear friend, he feels it neceſſary to accelerate a declaration fixed in his heart, and always trembling at his lips; and truſts to your goodneſs, candour, and honour, to pardon a preſumption juſtice muſt authorize; and though he dreads worſe than death the idea of wounding your delicacy, yet the circumſtances now exiſting permit him to have no alternative."

"Madame Bruyere ſat fixed in the ſame attentive poſture ſhe had aſſumed when the Counteſs began her long *introduction*, (for ſuch it was deſigned) ſhe ſeemed petrified; and how long ſhe would have continued in that apparent ſtupefaction is uncertain, had not the Marquis ſuddenly entered the arbour, and thrown himſelf at her feet.

She ſhrieked, and attempted to riſe; he

he reſpectfully reſeated her; the Counteſs took her other hand, and ſhe was thus compelled to liſten to every perſuaſive argument love, wit, and ingenuity could deduce from the ſeveral circumſtances before recapitulated by the Counteſs. The Marquis pleaded his adoration, her children's claims for a father and protector; his health, *his life* depending on her favour; and the juſtice due to herſelf, to triumph over the malice of her enemies. In ſhort, nothing was left unſaid that love and eloquence could ſuggeſt.

Then friendſhip ſtepped in with *her* oratory, and both ſo completely overpowered Madame Bruyere, that every attempt to ſpeak contrary to their wiſhes was run down by their volubility; entreaties, imploring, and the ſtrongeſt of all arguments to a tender mother, the aſſurance of providing nobly for her children, and procuring to them a father, protector, and friend for ever.

She entreated "time"—It was an ungenerous delay—She pleaded "delicacy"—

ſhe

ſhe was anſwered by the calumnies of Mademoiſelle Serac—She acknowledged "the coldneſs of her heart, every ſentiment of love was buried with her dear Bruyere." The Marquis knew the value of that noble heart; he would truſt to time, and his unremitting tenderneſs to procure himſelf an intereſt there.

"The recent death of her beloved Bruyere, ſorrow fixed in her boſom, dead to every ſentiment of pleaſure, to give a hand cold and thankleſs, it was unjuſt, it was indecorus."—The generous Marquis "would indulge and ſympathize in thoſe ſorrows; good ſenſe and ſound judgment were ſuperior to the forms of decorum that did not militate againſt virtue, and the dictates of reaſon." Thus was every objection, every remonſtrance, borne down by a torrent of eloquence, and what they termed *un*anſwerable arguments, which were concluded by this apoſtrophe of the Counteſs.

"O, how will the ſainted ſpirit of your be-

beloved children's father rejoice, when he ſees perfect happineſs diffuſed among his family; when that object ſo dear to him, now conſtitutes the felicity of his beſt of friends, and in ſo doing has procured to his children a parent and protector from the malignancy of his enemies."

"You *cannot* convince my judgment, you *cannot* touch my heart," ſaid Madame Bruyere, tears ſtreaming down her cheeks, "but I can no longer contend the point—remember I do not deceive you, my Lord; I have no heart to beſtow; eſteem, reſpect, and gratitude, is all I can engage for."

The moſt rapturous expreſſions, and the warmeſt congratulations flowed from the ſucceſsful pleaders; ſhe entreated permiſſion to retire to her own apartment; ſhe was reſpectfully attended to the door of it; the Marquis kiſſed her hand, "*Now* and *ever* it will be the pride and happineſs of my life to comply with your every wiſh.—Judge favourably of me, deareſt Ma-

Madame, and let reflection be my friend." She bowed, but could not articulate a word.

She entered the chamber, and ſaw her children; they flew to her; ſhe threw herſelf in her chair, and warmly embraced them: "O, my beloved children, what a ſacrifice have I made to you!" Both in a breath begged to know what their dear mamma meant, what they had done to grieve her.—"Ah, who has vexed you," ſaid Henry, "tell me, mamma, who grieves you; I will ſoon puniſh the perſon that makes my mamma weep; I am ſure it is not my ſiſter that has done it."—"I!" ſaid Henrietta, "I make mamma weep? O, no, ſhe is dearer to me than all the world; I would ſuffer any thing to make my beloved mamma happy."

Madame Bruyere could only preſs them to her boſom—"You have done nothing to offend me," were her only words; emotions the moſt violent oppreſſed her boſom—ſhe had given her conſent to marry the Marquis; what a violation of decency, how

how repugnant to every feeling of her heart! How weak her compliance to meaſures ſhe ſo entirely diſapproved!

I have been driven by a combination artfully deſigned to be the voluntary victim to their ſchemes; I ſee the whole plan, my heart reproaches the imbecility of my reſolutions; in no one deſign formed by inclination and judgment, have I perſevered; the dupe of others, I have been terrified, threatened, and flattered into their plans; and the climax of my weak irreſolutions is now complete!

The moſt pitiable agonies followed the retroſpection of paſt ſcenes, and for ſome hours ſhe gave way to the moſt terrible deſpair.

But all violences muſt ſubſide; exhauſted by her extreme emotions, ſhe threw herſelf on the bed, and more calmly reflected on her conduct.—Step by ſtep ſhe had gradually been led on to give up her own wiſhes a ſacrifice to her children, "And if *their* intereſt and happineſs was ſecured by her compliance, had ſhe

ſhe not fulfilled the duty of a mother? Should ſhe not be well rewarded for every pain and anxiety ſhe felt, in ſeeing them reſpectably provided for beyond her utmoſt hopes, and riſe ſuperior to the malice of their fortune? If *their* happineſs was in *her* hands, would not their beloved father require from her every ſacrifice to accompliſh it? Was not the paſſion of the Marquis perfectly diſintereſted? Would not hundreds of young women of birth and fortune be proud of his partiality? And did he not demand from her reſpect and gratitude for a preference that certainly did her honour? All theſe truiſms her reaſon acknowledged, but her heart was in the tomb with her beloved huſband.

"Well, then," ſaid ſhe, ſighing, after exhauſting every painful reflection, yet at the ſame time doing juſtice to the affection and generoſity of the Marquis—— "Well, then, I ſee my deſtiny is ſealed, and that it becomes me now to ſtifle that grief,

grief, to conceal these emotions that must give pain to him.—I will do my duty henceforth, I will learn to oblige in my turn; whatever painful efforts I make, I owe it to his generosity to bury my regrets and sorrow in my own bosom."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.